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The Saturday Review of Literature

EDITED BY HENRY SEIDEL CANBY

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Midsummer Optimism

IT would seem that this intensely industrial civilization of ours, as we look about us, is actually, in this particular phase, developing a hunger for reading. More people in this country at least are reading than ever before. They are reading biography, with its sidelights on history, books on the modern sciences, some philosophy, a deal of fiction, and even a little poetry. Once in every so often, indeed, a long poem, or series of poems all related, has become so popular as to attain a sale unheard of in the old days. Yet how much has all this modern reading to do with a true love of literature?

And how would one define literature today,—not that, indeed, the definition should be very different from elder definitions? In the first place, what we think of as literature is the opposite of the ephemeral. Most of the writing of this day—as of other days—is ephemeral, or will prove so. No single author of today will enter the pantheon of true literature with more than one or two works. A large portion of most authors' work will remain outside the temple. This is natural enough, and has been the case in all ages. But we believe also that when the early twentieth century of American literature, the first quarter, can be seen in true perspective it will prove an era richer in literature than any that has gone before. Not that there will be names in it greater than certain names in the past. When we summon up Whitman, Poe, Emerson, Melville, and Hawthorne, we summon genius. And yet we dare to assert that there has been genius in our own age, so far, both in prose and in poetry. How has it been received?

Strangely enough it seems to us to have been received with the evidence of a love of true literature in a wide audience. This is, of course, not true in all cases, nor is it untrue in certain cases that our modern publicizing machinery, an adjunct to intensive publishing, has brought especially good writing to many who would not have chanced on it for themselves. In America, for every commodity that possesses any merit at all (as for many commodities that do not possess it) the recently developed potencies of advertising work minor miracles. We do not see them as minor miracles because we have now become entirely used to advertising. We expect to see everything prominently advertised before we buy it. With books, it is true, advertising has reached a stage where the reaction is setting in and the more sapient are girding at "a hundred masterpieces a month." Usually somebody of some prominence, it would seem, can be got to say something in the nature of a superlative about almost any recent book. But even in the face of this mass of overstatement, the really good things usually come into their own. In a metropolis like New York there is competition not merely in the writing and publishing of books but among those who would be the first discoverers of new, unusual talent, to praise it, to overpraise it perhaps, but still to encourage it and discriminate concerning it as against the mass of reading matter.

And in modern publishing offices as never before, owing to the intense competition, there are many eyes alert for that uncanny force of statement that we associate with literature. Indeed so great is the annual output of mere manuscript in this country, and so mediocre its general quality, that really trained, informed, and sagacious writing leaps easily to the eye. Which may seem to contradict what we have just optimistically said about the quality of the work in the first quarter of this century. It does not, actually.

It does not contradict what we have already said because the profession of writing in this country alone is now widespread in its membership, its output is upon a remarkably large scale. We have only to look around at the inundation of periodical "literature" to see that this is so. Hence there is opportunity in each year for two or three writers either so to emerge from the ruck or so to consolidate their position that they convince of great talent at least.

Naturally a whole publishing season may and does go by without any American work appearing that is much above the facile average. There are short periods of seeming stagnation. We are speaking in very general terms. But we believe that sure signs have been given of the vitality of letters in this country, more promising signs than appeared in the nineteenth century,—an awareness of significantly rich material in more different types of American existence, both in the past and the present. Both in prose and in poetry the younger American writers are wide awake to the manifestations of their own time, they are stirred by its psychological implications. The American character's chief contribution to modern

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Haymaker's Dream

By LOUIS UNTERMEYER

HERE'S a new moon; and I
Finding it sharp and dry,
Will swing it down the sky,

Where time has burned, and far
Beyond, blue grasses are
Topped with a dangerous star

That must be cut away,
Too hazardous for hay.
I have not long to stay

Not long enough to stack;
For something—love or lack—
Urges I must go back.

But not until I have striven
To harvest in this heaven.
Let what is given be given.

This Week

"Confessions of Zeno."
Reviewed by ANGEL FLORES.

"Brief Candles."
Reviewed by LEE WILSON DODD.

"The Great Astronomers."
Reviewed by W. MAXWELL REED.

"William Pitt, the Younger."
Reviewed by DAVID OWEN.

In Memoriam: Sherlock Holmes.
By CHRISTOPHER MORLEY.

"Prosperity—Fact or Myth."
Reviewed by C. E. WARNE.

"The Cabinet Council of England."
Reviewed by DAVID HARRIS WILLSON.

Next Week

Reviews of Book Club Selections for August.

The Growth of a Titan

By STUART GILBERT
Author of "James Joyce's 'Ulysses'"

IN his recent review of a fragment* of James Joyce's "Work in Progress," Mr. David Cort describes the synthetic diction invented by the Irish author for his new work as "a Titan's revolt against language." The family of Titans was a large one in every sense of the word, but it was specially, I imagine, of that earliest of revolutionaries, Cronus, that Mr. Cort was thinking. Cronus, youngest of the Titans and most courageous, championing Mother Earth against Father Heaven, unmanned the latter with an adamantine sickle and from the blood-drops of the wounded tyrant, raining down into the sea, were born the Furies, Daughters of Night.

Thus, indeed, almost *verbatim*, several of Joyce's earliest critics described "Ulysses"—as (to quote an Irish writer) "an assault upon divine decency as well as human intelligence," or (according to the *Dublin Review*) "a devilish drench . . . sin against the Holy Ghost." It has been truly said that a prophet is not without honor save in his own country and in his own house!

And now we have "Work in Progress"** (the provisional title of Joyce's still unfinished work, over half of which, however, has appeared in the pioneer review *transition*), an assault, the critical pontiffs affirm, on literary decency as "devilish" as the attack on divine decency which shocked Mr. Shane Leslie. Given the plainspokenness of "Ulysses" and the verbal audacities of "Work in Progress," it is perhaps not surprising that Mr. Joyce has been hailed in certain quarters as a "literary Bolshevist," whose object and delight is to blow sky high all conventions, social and artistic.

* * *

But, if we consider Mr. Joyce's work as a continous whole, from the formally impeccable set of poems entitled "Chamber Music" to his latest experiment, it will be clear, I think, that his progress is one of evolution not revolution—but an evolution so speeded up that, at first sight, it looks like the holocaust of tradition, a wanton "scrapping" of past discoveries. For while (as the Victorian sang) normal literature broadens slowly down "from precedent to precedent," the Irish writer progresses by leaps and bounds, taking with unflagging zest hurdle after hurdle of literary achievement.

The metaphor is appropriate, for Mr. Joyce has the build of an athlete, lithe and tensely sprung, and still prefers vaulting a gate to opening it. As a boy at the Jesuit school of Clongowes in Ireland he won many prizes at hurdle-racing; he was, moreover, a tireless swimmer and zealous at work as at play. There is nothing "decadent" about Joyce; he has an athletic mind in a nimble body. Such a mind could not but revel in the springy subtleties of Jesuit logic and, in his youth, Joyce was saturated with the spirit of the Catholic Church. He roamed Dublin observing the futility and ugliness of the life about him with the eye of a priest, and heard the Dubliners' bawdy talk in their speakeasy's with the ear of a father confessor. But, as often happens with abnormally imaginative adolescents, the Church overdid her work, and in the "Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man" (his first novel) we see him in "a region of viscid gloom," literally vomiting with the nausea of a mental agony evoked by the Jesuits' lurid pictures of hell. In that novel (almost en-

* HAVETH CHILDERS EVERYWHERE. By JAMES JOYCE. New York: The Fountain Press, 1930.
** TALES TOLD OF SHEM AND SHAUN. Paris: The Black Sun Press.

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tirely autobiographical) James Joyce himself is the protagonist, under the name of Stephen Dedalus. The name is significant—that of the first airman, who made himself wings to fly overseas from a tyrant's isle to a southern land of liberty.

"You talk to me of nationality, language, religion," Stephen Dedalus says. "I shall try to fly by those nets."

The "Portrait" is a tale of evasion, a spiritual echo of that oft-told theme, the prisoner's escape from captivity. "Ulysses" marks a further stage of evolution and "Work in Progress" yet another milestone, far beyond "Ulysses," on the rocky road to freedom. For now the constraints not only of nationality and religion, but also of language, are broken through and our "hawk-like man" is freely soaring sunward, beyond and above the nets flung at his soul to hold it back from flight.

But (if I may be pardoned the *cliché*) his liberty is not license. The kind of freedom to which young Dedalus aspired was not that harum-scarum extroversion of the "subconscious" which is, or was till yesterday, the last word in modernity. No, like nature herself, like the achievements of science, Joyce's progress is always towards a richer synthesis of life, a greater altitude of flight and wider horizons. As his work develops, we find a growing interest in form, a finer tesselation of thematic patterns, and a closer linking up of style with subject, til of "Work in Progress" one may literally assert *le style c'est le thème.*

* * *

Already in "Dubliners" (an early collection of short stories), the ferment of that symbolical symmetry, so characteristic of Joyce's later writing, was at work. Take, for example, the story "Grace," which opens with the discovery of Mr. Kernan, a "commercial," lying at the foot of the stairs down which he has fallen, drunk, in an underground public-house lavatory. "His clothes were smeared with the filth and ooze of the floor on which he had lain, face downwards. His eyes were closed and he breathed with a grunting noise." Mr. Kernan is taken home and found to have bitten off the tip of his tongue. "Oh, he'll do for himself one day and that's the holy alls of it," his wife exclaims. "He's been drinking since Friday." The victim is put to bed. Meanwhile some of his friends contrive a plot to rescue him, visit him two nights later, and, after due remonstrance, casually mention that they are going to "wash the pot together" by going to a "retreat" for business men on Thursday night. The conversation is skilfully kept on religious topics such as the priesthood and papal infallibility, till presently Mr. Kernan consents to attend the "retreat" service.

In the last pages we see him at the Jesuit church and hear extracts from Father Purdon's sermon. "He came to speak to business men and he would speak to them in a businesslike way. If he might use the metaphor, he said, he was their spiritual accountant." And so forth. "The gentlemen were all well-dressed and orderly," the atmosphere was decorous, and the Jesuit, "a powerful-looking figure," impressed sinner Kernan as much by his appearance as by his casuistic conjugation of God and Mammon.

Every phrase of "Grace," in appearance simple to naivety, is barbed with irony. And behind the narrative looms a mocking shadow of Dante's "Divine Comedy"; for it falls naturally into three parts, an "Inferno" (in the basement lavatory), a "Purgatorio" (the tactful purging of Kernan's conscience by his friends), and a "Paradiso" (the prosperous elect gathered together under the presidency of a white-robed stalwart).

The "Portrait," too, is more than the story of a keen-witted and sensitive boy, the struggles of adolescence, and, at last, escape. In it we find as well the ordered evolution of a philosophy, of an attitude to the jumble of events and sensations we name experience. The young man encounters life "hot for certainties," an answer to the eternal question: What does life *mean?* The Church offers a solution, but intelligence and sensibility conspire to reject it. Next philosophy flatters the intellect—yet, for all its parade of logic, gives but a "dusty answer." From dust of philosophy and ashes of religion Stephen Dedalus turns to that dynamic, vital synthesis of experience which he finds in the "beauty of order," the artist's cosmic vision. (This was, indeed, implied in the title: "A Portrait of the Artist.") The concluding pages are devoted to a statement of Stephen's esthetic creed.

Young Dedalus has found his wings. Not in religion, not in politics, nor in philosophy, can he fulfil himself, but in the creation of a formal beauty, the artist's composition of the many into the one. The search for absolute truth, most hopeless of quests (unless, like the scientist, one limit it to mere phenomena or, like the priest, to a set of dogmas) is over for him. It is only in ordered beauty—like the Venus of Milo, of no time and of all time—that Stephen's soul can find repose. On that discovery the chronicle of the young artist's struggle towards self-realization ends. He is now ready for the creation of that ordered pageant of human life, ancient and modern, that is "Ulysses."

* * *

"Ulysses" has been so often dissected, defended, or decried by writers of all nations that it is needless for me to dwell on its theme. Four or five times the length of an ordinary novel, it records but eighteen hours of a man's life. The action is entirely situated at Dublin, and, in the course of its eighteen episodes we follow the "hero," Mr. Bloom, a business man in a small way, into all the crannies of the Irish city-state, with him we visit a cemetery, a newspaper office, a church, a brothel, a maternity hospital, and several of Dublin's many taverns. By the device of the "silent monologue" we can get inside the skin of Mr. Bloom and watch driftwood of thought and sentiment, jetsam of memory, bobbing up to the surface of Mr. Bloom's consciousness. Thus we "hear" Mr. Bloom's thoughts after a glass of wine:

> Glowing wine on his palate lingered swallowed. Crushing in the wine-press grapes of Burgundy. Sun's heat it is. Seems to a secret touch telling me memory. Touched his sense moistened remembered. Hidden under wild ferns on Howth. Below us bay sleeping sky. No sound. The sky. The bay purple by the Lion's head. . . . Fields of undersea, the lines faint brown in grass, buried cities. Pillowed on my coat she had her hair, earwigs in the heather scrub my hand under her nape, you'll toss me all. O wonder! Coolsoft with ointments her hand touched me, caressed: her eyes upon me did not turn away. Ravished over her I lay, full lips wide open, kissed her mouth. Yum. . . . Soft, warm, sticky gumjelly lips.

This cinematic record of thoughts is only one of many innovations employed in the dedal labyrinth of "Ulysses." Each episode has its own technique, its own set of symbols, an appropriate color, and is related to a special organ of the human body. There are in "Ulysses" examples of nearly every literary form, from Early English to the latest slang, and the texture is as variegated as that of nature herself.

* * *

At first sight "Ulysses" may seem a chaos of riotous imaginings, a betrayal of order, of decency, of all that evolution has achieved to raise man above his fellow animals. But a closer study shows that each word is used as exactly as in a scientific manual, always with the same connotation, and that "Ulysses" is linked together by an all-pervading rhythm, just as each part of the body—and here we see why Joyce has related each episode to a bodily organ—is joined to all the others by a vital synthesis, a complex of nerves and muscles. "Ulysses" is, in fact, the most "symbolical" book ever written (the most intensely "living," too), for it is a small scale miniature of the universal macrocosm. Mr. Bloom's day is a paradigm of all days and his adventures illustrate the whole range of human activity. The title itself, a deliberate recall of the greatest of epic historias, suggests one aspect of the *rapprochement.* The Greeks saw in the "Odyssey" their Bible, a mirror of life, a parable of the wandering soul seeking to find itself, and in "Ulysses" we are invited to see a like meaning. If time after time (as I point out in my "James Joyce's Ulysses: A Study,") Mr. Joyce reproduces in a modern setting the adventures of Ulysses, it is not for the humorous incongruity—though humor there is everywhere in "Ulysses"—nor to impose an artificial unity on a series of sketches, not even because Ulysses was, as it happens, his boyhood's hero. It is because the adage "history repeats itself" has a deeper application than is generally believed and there is a rhythm, a recurrence, in human evolution, as many besides theosophists have observed. The ancient Irish held that every poet was a prophet and could in trance perceive both past and future events. Timelessness, in fact, is the supreme quality of a work of art and its validity, unlike "news," is not for to-day only. The interpreter of Joyce can echo Porphyry's opinion of Homer: "it must not be denied that he has obscurely indicated the images of things of a more divine nature in the fiction of a fable."

James Joyce's "Work in Progress" is the highest hurdle he has yet "taken," surpassing even "Ulysses" in scope and complexity. It is assuredly the most curious and intricate book the world has seen. Less than half the size of its predecessor (to judge by the parts which have appeared in *transition*), it will comprise an epitome or synthesis of life richer even than that of "Ulysses." Difficult reading, no doubt, but so scintillant with humor that, even if the reader can only penetrate the uppermost of the layers of meaning, superimposed (like cinematic images) one upon another, the mere sound and look of the prose, its verbal antics, are a delight in themselves. The basic idea is (as in "Ulysses") a theory of recurrence, moulded, most probably, on the Italian Vico's "cycle of history"; the dimensions of time and space are telescoped and we see, like gods or as in dream, all history in the flash of a moment. As the Chinese poet wrote a millennium ago: "True indeed is that saying of the Wise Men, 'A hundred years are but a moment of sleep.'" "Work in Progress" has the aspect of a dream and is written in a dream language. We are shown a panorama of city, field, and forest, seen dimly beneath a moon darkened ever and again by scudding clouds, the landscape of a vision. Sometimes the texture lightens to a tissue of rippling gossamer, vaguely reminiscent in its superficial aspect of that Wonderland to which Alice has led so many happy children and happily unsophisticated elders. Such a passage is the "pastoral" of Jaun the Irishman, in which he gives a company of twenty-nine (for it is leap year) pretty girls a musico-floral version of a birdland nocturne:

> O twined me abower in l'Alouette's Tower, all Adelaide's naughtingerls juckjucking benighth me, I'd tonic my twittynice Dorian blackbudds off my singasongapiccolo to pipe musicall airs on numberous fairyaciodes. I give, a king, to me, she does alone up there, yes see, I double give, till the spinney all eclosed asong with them.

The passage goes to the lilt of a frolicsome Irish song. Here "l'Alouette" refers not only to the lark but to a Dublin firm, and "Adelaide" (for reasons concerning Jaun's career) to the Australian capital as well as the famous song. The nightingales have turned naughty and *beneath* has grown nocturnal. Almost every word is nuanced so as to recall the *motifs* of the passage—music, birds, and flowers. In "twittynice blackbudds" we hear the twittering chatter of twenty-nine *jeunes filles en fleurs* and the echo of a familiar nursery rhyme. "Numerous" is changed so as to suggest poetic "numbers" and *numerosus* (Lat: *musical*); "variations" is Italianized (Italian forms, the language of music, have been prepared for in the context) and yields "fairy" plus "odes." A few lines before Jaun spoke of "solfanelly" (Italian matches, with a hint of the "tonic solfa") and this, combined with the word "tonic," gives the clue to the next sentence, "I give, a king, etc." This sentence is a translation of the notes of the scale (*do, re, mi, fa,* etc.) as an Italian understands them. (The note *si,* for instance, is the Italian "Yes.") The word "echoed" has been wedded to the French *éclosion,* the blossoming of a flower, a posy of birdnotes rippling up the scale.

* * *

The lightness of the rhythm befits the theme of this passage which (like all "Work in Progress," all epic poems) is meant to be read aloud. Here is much more than a mere word game, the exploitation of puns or "portmanteau words"; it is a new method of handling language whereby such a "dead" word as "twenty-nine," a mere enumerative, is reanimated by the transfusion of vivid meaning. The numeral skeleton is apparent, but it is clad with the attributes of life. *Le mot, qu'on le sache, est un être vivant,* Victor Hugo's dictum, so inapt to most contemporary writing, is confirmed by Joyce.

Another passage, describing the fall of Nuvoletta, a little cloud above the Vatican (the pages which go before are a veritable thesaurus of the sacerdotal terms so dear to Joyce), into the Tiber, is—despite a characteristic touch of irony—a filigree of iridescent nuances.

> Then Nuvoletta reflected for the last time in her little long life and she made up all her myriads of drifting minds in one. She cancelled all her engauzements. She climbed over the bannistars; she gave a childy cloudy cry: *Nuêe! Nuée!* A lightdress fluttered. She was gone. And into the river that had been a stream (for a thousand of tears had gone eon her and come on her and she was stout and struck on dancing and her muddied name was Missisliffi*) there

* "Missisliffi" is the Eve of the story under one of her many avatars; the Dublin river Anna Liffey (*Amnis Livius* of the Latin maps) is here merged into the Tiber and Mississippi. The river (any river) is the feminine element; the mountain is the male.

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fell a tear, a singular tear, the loveliest of all tears (I mean for those who are "keen" on the pretty-pretty commonface sort of thing you meet by hopeharrods) for it was a leap-tear. But the river tripped on her by and by, lapping as though her heart was brook: *Why, why, why! Weh, O weh! I'se so silly to be flowing but I no canna stay!*

The changes of "years" into "tears," of "on" into "eon," of "single" into "singult" (Latin *singultus*: a sob), are typical rejuvenations.

Mr. Cort is right; James Joyce is indeed a Titan in revolt, but not the anarchist Cronus—rather that other Titan, Prometheus, the beneficent—for he is bringing to language the vital fire it sorely lacked.

The question is often asked: What is the "story" of "Work in Progress?" A complete answer is obviously impossible till the entire work has been published and we can see exactly how, as in "Ulysses," each component fits into place. Meanwhile certain aspects are already apparent. The symbolism is on a vaster scale and still more intricate than in "Ulysses." The characters have multiple personalities (they are akin, perhaps, to the Platonic "ideas") and, according to the context, the light is thrown now on one facet, now on another. Opposite Anna Liffey, the Woman, we have her composite lover, Adam, the Hill of Howth, the Salmon of Wisdom ("Solman Annadromous"—that doubled "n" of *anadromous* is rife with unseemly suggestion!), Napoleon, etc. Dublin is again the ostensible scene of action, which, however, is world-wide in reality; an equator girdling the earth, or, rather, a cross-section laying bare simultaneously all the strata of human evolution.

"Hopelessly obscure" has been the verdict of most critics up to date (the same was said of "Ulysses" at first). Obscure, yes—but not hopelessly so, and not more so than any synthesis of life which, rejecting the short cuts of abstraction, gives a living picture of its theme and deals with personalities, not axioms. And—another shock for the wiseacres!—all over its vast panorama flicker the lambent lightnings of a characteristically Irish and Rabelaisian humor. Nothing is here of highbrow gravity and the note of tregedy is rarely heard. (Nor, despite appearances, was "Ulysses" an "epic of despair," for the protagonist is Mr. Bloom, a Falstaff, and the "Hamlet young man," Stephen Dedalus, plays second fiddle to him throughout.)

For those who look the facts of life and history squarely in the face there are but two alternatives—tears or laughter. Each brings to the Great War which humanity is waging against death, despair and decay, on a front that is never "All Quiet," the outlook of his own temperament. The Irishman Joyce has the spirit of the Sammies, Tommies, and Poilus of the front line, and cheerfully hums, as the harpies of death screech round his observation post,

> Pack up your troubles in your old kit bag and
> Smile, Smile, Smile!

Life Is Very Original

CONFESSIONS OF ZENO. By ITALO SVEVO. Translated from the Italian by Beryl de Zoete. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1930. $3.

Reviewed by ANGEL FLORES

ZENO, the hero of this novel, insists that "life is not difficult, but very original." His behavior always tends to prove the veracity of this, his philosophical motto. But, in a sense, Zeno's statement holds true for his literary creator. Italo Svevo, the efficient director of a Trieste paint factory, would smile, were he with us, at the surprising laudations critics keep piling on his tomb. His name is now coupled with that of Proust and Joyce as one of the great triumvirate of contemporary fiction. Life is, indeed, very original!

One day Svevo decided to improve his English. He registered in a Berlitz School only to find that his teacher was a certain Mr. James Joyce. Joyce was more than his instructor: he became his literary mentor and advisor, and soon broadcasted Svevo's name with such enthusiasm that now it has traversed all the literary frontiers.

The European conflict brought hysteria to most people but, on the contrary, it gave Svevo a holiday. His pocketbook, like that of all good business men, grew fatter, and he retired, not to play golf or collect stamps, but to write. In 1923 his masterpiece, "Confessions of Zeno," appeared, and in September, 1928, he was killed in an automobile accident. He was then sixty-seven years old, and he was proclaimed one of the most arresting figures in contemporary letters. Life is not difficult, but very original!

"Confessions of Zeno" has now come to America in the excellent translation of Beryl de Zoete. Previously the English reader knew Svevo through a short story, "The Wine that Kindles," which appeared in *transition* for February, 1929, in the translation of Sommerville Story, and a novelette translated by Beryl de Zoete as "The Hoax" and published this spring. "Confessions of Zeno" is the study of a conscience (the Italian title was "La Coscienza di Zeno.") In its broadest sense, it is an exciting burlesque of the methods of psychoanalysis. Zeno is a master of introspection and analyzes every word, every action. Decisions are drowned in a sea of platitudes. He is undermined by the very old Spanish, pre-revolutionary Russia disease-abulia. His malady has for its prodromes, like that of Oblomov, indecision and hypochondria. Zeno changes his career from law, which seemed to him so remote to life, to chemistry "in the hope of finding life itself though imprisoned in a retort." Soon he goes back from chemistry to law. He decides to gives up smoking, but through the 406 pages of the novel he smokes continually cigarette after cigarette. He falls in love with the prettiest daughter of the Malfenti family but, after proposing to the three sisters, marries the least attractive. The Triestian Zeno Cosini belongs, with the Don Quixote of la Mancha and the Tartarin of Tarascon, to the race of disorbited dreamers!

JAMES JOYCE
A cartoon by Scheel

Svevo monkeys with the instrument discovered by Stendhal and perfected by Dostoeivsky and Proust. Whether he handles the telescope or the microscope he likes to choose the wrong end to examine his object. His work becomes not *a jeu de mots* but a juicy, at times distorted, comment on the mechanics of the darker areas of the soul. In this respect he is nearer to Pirandello than to George Bernard Shaw, although both these humorous tendencies coincide and supplement each other in his robust creation.

The mind does not flow here like a stream. On the contrary it moves isochronally, each tic-tac leaving behind an infinite number of ripples and echoes. Every act becomes a malestrom, every decision a series of concatenations and adjustments. Thus even a simpleton's mind (Zeno often resembles a fool) is weirdly distorted, forever swinging among unbelievable complications.

Svevo walks boldly into labyrinths and jungles, and reappears later bearing lights of strange colors. He is gifted with irony and humor, and no writer, if we except the Blaise Cendrars of "Moravagine" and the Jules Romains of "The Death of a Nobody," has succeeded as well as Svevo in describing this twilight voyage verging on the realm of insanity. To paraphrase a felicitous thought of André Gide, one may say that after reading "Confessions of Zeno" the patterns of the old school of psychology appear more artificial and outdated than did the charts of chemistry after the discovery of radium.

The Pageant of Lorna Doone was recently played on Selworthy Green, near Minehead, Somerset, England. This was the first occasion on which the Exmoor romance had been presented in pageant form.

The pageant, generally speaking, faithfully followed the romantic story woven by R. D. Blackmore around the existence of "Girt Jan Ridd" and pretty Lorna Doone, and also round the somewhat legendary exploits of the robber Doones. The love story of Jan and Lorna is the theme running throughout the pageant.

Clinical Studies

BRIEF CANDLES. By ALDOUS HUXLEY. New York: Doubleday, Doran & Co. 1930. $2.50.

Reviwed by LEE WILSON DODD

MR. ALDOUS HUXLEY is an accomplished writer, and he has chosen to make himself the historian and satirist of England's (or should one say, London's) contemporary decadent civilization. Mr. Huxley has a bleak, accurate eye, a pouncing, cat-like, and not too merciful understanding. Nor is he an enthusiast for the quality of mercy; he does not—one feels justified in asserting—consider it twice blest. Indeed, he would be more apt himself to assert that it curses both him who gives and him who takes—for he is exceedingly suspicious of any tendency to softness and in the neighborhood of the Christian slave-morality his temperature descends very rapidly toward zero.

In the four stories, or clinical studies, collected under the above mocking title, Mr. Huxley expends a deal of his wit, perhaps somewhat dampened by a growing prolixity, on a number of people who (from any viewpoint but that of a scientific psychologist's) are hardly worth the pains he has taken to vivisect them. That, having done so, he does in one sense enter into them and cause his readers to comprehend their visceral writhings is not to be questioned; what may be questioned, I think, is whether or not it is well to mobilize whole parks of artillery for the destruction of a few negligible Mayflies. It is possible, of course—nay, it is probable—that Mr. Huxley, having deeply observed mankind, has been forced to conclude that we are all negligible Mayflies and that any one of us will serve as well as another as an object lesson in human futility. If this be true, one can only regret the insidious myopia, now usually called "sophistication," which is blurring and distorting Mr. Huxley's eyesight. He tends to see only what is very near him, and misses a good deal that certain other, equally honest, observers have now and then been able to descry in human life.

If you have read "The Great Meadow," by Elizabeth Madox Roberts, and if its deeply woven probity, tenderness, and beauty have moved you, you will understand the more perfectly what I mean. And there are also four lines by Humbert Wolfe which are not inappropriate:

> It is easier to be angry than to pity, it is easier to condemn than to understand, easier to find the celestial City than the dim counties of the Holy Land.

Man and the Stars

THE GREAT ASTRONOMERS. By HENRY SMITH WILLIAMS. New York: Simon & Schuster. 1930. $6.

Reviewed by W. MAXWELL REED

THIS is a book which tells a story from several points of view, and always in a scholarly and inspiring manner.

One theme which runs through the volume is best summarized in the words of Mr. Williams: "A story, . . . not primarily of the stars, but of man's relation to the stars." From this point of vantage he describes man's struggle against superstition and his progress onward from mythology. For it was the expanding knowledge of the universe from epoch to epoch that gave our ancestors the power to repel the gloom of ancient myth and superstition. So the author has taken the lives of the great astronomers from the Greeks to our present time as so many pegs upon which to hang his story of the intellectual enfranchisement of the human race. With this object in view, he has very properly excluded all those events connected with the astronomers, which did not help him unfold his story, although such events in some cases might be of considerable importance in themselves.

From another point of view the book illustrates over and over again how each bit of progress has been attained only after a foundation has been laid by some previous discovery or successful piece of research. Speaking of Hipparchus, Mr. Williams says: "After all this is but another case in which the observer of one generation builds on the work of his predecessor, and in which credit for discovery is given, and justly given, to the man who makes tangible an idea that before him had been only vaguely adumbrated." In his chapter on Sir Isaac

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Newton he quotes that distinguished mathematician as follows: "If I have seen further than other men, it is because I have stood on the shoulders of giants." The inevitability also of each step in progress in most and perhaps in all cases is made increasingly evident as one proceeds in this interesting narrative. If one man had not succeeded, another would have, perhaps a decade, perhaps a century later.

Mr. Williams illustrates in many ways how the world of scientists was prepared for the next step in progress, and how almost inevitable that next step was. For example:

> It has been said that he (Jeremiah Horrox) had clearer intimations of the law of gravitation—though he died two years before Newton was born. As to that it should be recalled that a general conception of the probable truth of what came to be known as the law of inverse squares . . . was forecast by a number of Newton's contemporaries.

Another example is the discovery of the dark lines in the solar spectrum and their proper interpretation. They were discovered in 1792 by Wallaston and again rediscovered by Fraunhofer in 1815. Finally they were at least partially explained by Kirchoff about the time that Darwin's "Origin of Species" was published in 1859.

Probably Ellsworth Huntington would tell us that this inevitability all depends upon continued favorable climatic conditions and that if we should be overwhelmed by another Permain glacier devolution might take the place of evolution. Perhaps we would repeat the history of that family of gay mammals who were proud of their progressive ancestors as they enjoyed the forests and shores of North America of long ago, but who on account of family misfortunes were obliged to devote themselves to a seafaring life and ultimately became whales. But let us take a more cheerful view and assume that we are approaching a warm interglacial epoch, wherein human happiness and comfort will exceed all descriptions of heaven in what Mr. Williams calls "oriental anthologies."

Each biography is short but told in a dramatic manner, so that the reader is less conscious of the mechanical effort of reading than is the case with most histories of science. Toward the end of the book the method of procedure by means of short biographies has been abandoned. It was necessary that it should be; for in recent years one epoch-making discovery has followed another in such bewildering profusion as to preclude the possibility of giving an adequate exposition of progress from any point of veiw by means of separate biographies.

This modern epoch commences according to Mr. Williams with the publication of the "Origin of Species," and with Kirchhoff's and Bunson's explanation of the Fraunhoffer lines:

> The year 1859 and another epoch. When the time comes to reform the calendar, it will be well to use that date for the initial year of the new era. Then occurred what in the not distant future will be recognized as the most momentous event in human history—the publication of Darwin's "Origin of Species."
>
> By a breath taking coincidence, the same year saw the stars virtually brought to earth and analyzed in the laboratory.
>
> Now for the first time was revealed the unity of nature of every microscopic living cell of the organic world, and the unity of nature of every telescopic cell of the sidereal universe. At last a new scientific Revelation enabled man for the first time to envisage with a measure of clarity his true position in the cosmos.

At considerable length and very clearly Mr. Williams describes the possibilities of a closed universe as conceived by Kelvin and Einstein. He elaborates the fascinating conception of the bending of the rays of light hither and thither by the curvature of space. These shafts of energy then make whirlpools and from such vortices emerge negative and positive charges of electricity called electrons and protons. Thus the circle of events is closed, for it was the destruction of matter in the heart of a star which created the light beams, the shafts of energy—from which came the cosmic eddies. Then from the nature of things, the protons and electrons are drawn together to form atoms and atoms unite to form molecules and two molecules of hydrogen may unite to form an atom of helium.

The Arènes de Lutèce, Gallo-Roman remains in the heart of Paris, are being used for outdoor performances this Summer by Théâtre Française and the Odéon players. Students of a dramatic society also presented Racine's "Andromaque" with the assistance of several members of the Odéon troupe.

A Born Statesman

WILLIAM PITT, THE YOUNGER. By P. W. Wilson. New York: Doubleday, Doran & Co. 1930. $3.

Reviewed by David Owen
Yale University

If ever a child was consecrated to the service of the Treasury Bench, it was Pitt the Younger. Son of the incomparable Chatham and nephew of Grenville and Temple, he entered his political career as one claims his legal inheritance. The boy was a prodigy, and it was Chatham's ambition to make of him the perfect Parliamentarian. Even as a child he breathed the atmosphere of the House of Commons; "in the nursery, in the schoolroom, at the university, he lived in its temperature," Lord Rosebery remarks. To Chatham he daily declaimed passages from Shakespeare and Milton and rendered into sonorous English sentences the Latin that he had been reading with his tutor. At Cambridge he studied mathematics and the classics. The young statesman must have command of figures, and felicitous quotations from the classics were his passport to a hearing in Parliament. Finally—and this was by no means the conventional equipment of the eighteenth century statesman—the son of Chatham had read and digested his Adam Smith.

But the greatness of William Pitt was not wholly a matter of inherited gifts or conscious training. It was the peculiar world of eighteenth century England, a world as cosy and self-contained as Berkeley Square itself, that gave the young man his chance. At the age of twenty-three this "miracle of precocity" refused the seals of the First Lord of the Treasury, at twenty-four he accepted them, and held them continuously until he was forty-two. Such an achievement would be scarcely possible to-day, when the high offices of state are usually reserved for the elder statesman. But the England of the eighteenth century was a realm in which genius could shine,—if it belonged to the right families. The House of Commons was the preserve of an aristocracy whose members were as familiar with its benches as with their own fireside, their Homer, and their hounds. As yet there were no Oxford and Cambridge Unions to serve as a Parliamentary proving-ground, but members of the governing class knew each other intimately and were acute at measuring the political prospects of their juniors. The legend is that Lady Holland, mother of Charles James Fox, reported to her husband, after having seen William Pitt (age seven), "Mark my words, that little boy will be a thorn in Charles's side as long as he lives." The young Pitt was born into this magic circle, and in the fluid and chaotic politics of the eighteenth century his genius found its opportunity.

In introducing his William Pitt, Mr. P. W. Wilson emphasizes the need for a new life of the "boy-statesman." The standard biography, that by Lord Stanhope, has been long out of print, and it is nearly forty years since Lord Rosebery's brilliant little volume appeared. A career "spent in the parliamentary and administrative atmosphere" and as a publicist has helped to fit Mr. Wilson for his task. The former has given him an easy familiarity with the methods and spirit of the House of Commons, while the hand of the journalist is apparent on every page of the book. Its merits are those of clear, straightforward narrative, written with a gratifying economy of epigram and psychological probing. Furthermore, Mr. Wilson has been at commendable pains to acquaint his American readers with the English political system and with the social atmosphere of the eighteenth century.

Since the author does not profess to have written an authoritative biography of his hero, it is perhaps ungracious to deplore his excessive reliance on the standard "Lives," especially on Stanhope. Some biographical architects can quarry all of their stone in old quarries and yet erect a structure that is essentially new and original. Mr. Wilson has not altogether succeeded at this high art. Not only has his material come from familiar quarries, but he has failed to build these isolated stones into his own plan. His work, in short, seems almost wholly dependent upon that of his predecessors.

Nevertheless, it is a pleasure to record that a life of Pitt is again available. In the main, it is the story of a born statesman, whose administration during an era of peace, might have marked the progress of a fertile liberalism, but whose "wings were clipped by the shears of necessity." Pitt, the intimate of Wilberforce, had been a crusader against the slave trade, had introduced a bill for Parliamentary reform, and had advocated generous treatment of the Irish. But in the crucial struggle with the Revolution and Napoleon all of these interests dropped away, and there was left only the religion of patriotism. "At the end of his life he was like a tree pruned of its spreading foliage. . . ." Leaves and branches had been shot away by revolutionary cannon and withered by the smoke of battle. Only the shaft of sturdy English oak remained standing. It was not Pitt's lot to see the war carried through to success, for the news of Austerlitz killed him. But his fame has proved to be more permanent than that of many statesmen who live to sign the treaties which bring to a close the wars they have conducted.

The Newdigate English Verse Prize has been won for the fourth year in succession by a woman. This year's subject was "Dædalus," and the winner Miss Josephine L. Fielding, of St. Hilda's College. The Newdigate Prize of twenty-one guineas was founded by Sir Roger Newdigate, the "Sir Christopher Cheverel" of George Eliot's novel "Mr. Gilfil's Love Story." It is open to all undergraduates of Oxford University and was first awarded in 1806.

This year's Femina Prize, which is awarded annually for the best English work of imagination published during the past year, was won by Mr. Charles Morgan's "Portrait in a Mirror," and the Northcliffe Prize, which is a reciprocal award for a French book, went to "Le Sourire de l'Ange," by Léandre Vaillat.

Midsummer Optimism

(*Continued from page 17*)

existence has been its ardent inventiveness when confronted with industrial problems and its appetite for grandeur as it so far conceived grandeur. The cynical may say, "Yes, and this has produced the best plumbing in the world, skyscraper office buildings and apartment-houses, and a thousand different brands of toothpaste!" That is a part of what it has produced. But the ardent inventiveness and the appetite for grandeur are now informing works of art also, fixed with that strongly realistic vision that has already produced great railway systems and mammoth mills. It is something to feel in one's own pulse, if one is an American, though a little hard to define.

Hand in hand with these qualities go the great American failings, to be sure, blatancy, vulgarity, stridence, and over emphasis. Yet rooted in these very manifestations is a native satiric spirit—the eternal "kidding" spirit of our nation which may yet be the most potent force to save its soul alive. Here too is a tract of our literature with profound nonsense (if one may use the expression; the significant nonsense of Benchley, for instance) at one end and the rich slang of the street at the other. It is quick with the tempo of our epoch. It is not to be ignored.

So we feel optimistic in midsummer, despite the fact that the publishing business is said to have had a bad season. When the books are closed for the year we refuse to be daunted. Certainly American writing will refuse to be daunted, and out of much writing some literature will emerge.

According to the London *Publisher and Bookseller*, essays and *belles-lettres* in Britain, have this year, increased over the first half of last year by 108 per cent, technical works by 86 per cent, political and kindred books by 73 per cent, educational books by 46 per cent, children's books by 45 per cent, and fiction by 26½ per cent. (The number of novels published was 2,444, or nearly a hundred a week.) Furthermore, the increase applies to almost every price: the number of guinea books has more than doubled, and half-guinea books have gone up from twenty-three to forty-four.

The Saturday Review of Literature

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The Bowling Green

In Memoriam: Sherlock Holmes

IT was unfair of Conan Doyle to say (as he did in his delightful autobiography, *Memories and Adventures*) that Dr. Watson had never shown a gleam of humor nor made a single joke. Let me refute that at once. In the first chapter of *The Valley of Fear* the good doctor, after some rather sharp taunting by his friend, caught Holmes fairly off guard. They were speaking of Professor Moriarty.

"The famous scientific criminal," says Watson, "as famous among crooks as—"

"My blushes, Watson!" Holmes murmurs in a deprecating voice.

"I was about to say, as he is unknown to the public."

Even Holmes admitted that this was "a distinct touch."

But another evidence of Dr. Watson's mischief was his frequent sly allusion to the unrecorded adventures. All Holmes-and-Watson lovers must have brooded sadly on the titles of those untold tales. "The shocking affair of the Dutch steamship *Friesland*, which so nearly cost us both our lives," the case of Wilson the notorious canary-trainer, the repulsive story of the red leech, the story of the Giant Rat of Sumatra "for which the world is not yet prepared," the singular affair of the aluminum crutch, the Curious Experience of the Patterson Family in the Island of Uffa—these are some of the yarns we have had to do without; having only the melancholy assurance that the documents were safely on file in that famous dispatch box in the vaults of Cox's Bank at Charing Cross. Perhaps most of all I deplore that we never were told "the story of the politician, the lighthouse, and the trained cormorant." In this allusion we surely find Watson in a deliberately pawky vein.— We hoped against hope for some of these stories; we can never have them now.

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But there is one omission in the long Holmes-Watson history that some generous survivor could supply. It must not be forgotten that it was a certain "young Stamford," also a medico, who first introduced Watson to Sherlock Holmes; and the chance that brought this about was that Stamford and Watson met at the Criterion bar in London. Young Stamford was so specifically outlined in those first pages of the *Study in Scarlet* that I had always thought he might reappear some day in one of the adventures. I don't believe he ever did. But at least his immortal service in bringing the pair together should be remembered. A small tablet in that famous bar-room would be a graceful memento; I think it should be erected by the London publisher who bought the complete copyright of *A Study in Scarlet* for £25. And in any healths drunk in the matter by visiting pilgrims I suggest also a grateful side-look to the gallant Murray, the orderly who saved Dr. Watson's life in Afghanistan.

The whole Sherlock Holmes saga is a triumphant illustration of art's supremacy over life. Perhaps no fiction character ever created has become so charmingly real to his readers. It is not that we take our blessed Sherlock too seriously; if we really want the painful oddities of criminology let us go to Bataille or Roughead. But Holmes is pure anesthesia. We read the stories again and again; perhaps most of all for the little introductory interiors which give a glimpse of 221B Baker Street. The fact that Holmes had earlier lodgings in Montague Street (alongside the British Museum) is forgotten. That was before Watson, and we must have Watson too. Rashly, in the later years, Holmes twice undertook to write stories for himself. They have not quite the same magic. No, we are epicures. We must begin in Baker Street; and best of all, if possible, let it be a stormy winter morning when Holmes routs Watson out of bed in haste. The doctor wakes to see that tall ascetic figure by the bedside with a candle. "Come, Watson, come! The game is afoot!" If that is not possible, then I prefer to find Holmes stretched on the sofa in a fit of the dumps; perhaps he is scraping on the violin, or bemoaning the dearth of imaginative crime and reaching for the cocaine (a habit he evidently outgrew, for we hear little of it in the later adventures.) We have a glimpse of the sitting-room, that room we know so well. There are the great volumes of scrapbook records; the bullet marks on the walls; the mysterious "gasogene" which appears occasionally in English fiction and which I can only suppose to be some sort of syphon-bottle. (There is also a sort of decanter-holder called a "tantalus" now and then set out on the sideboard; another mystery for American readers, and now more than ever true to its name.) The Persian slipper for tobacco and the coal-scuttle for cigars don't appeal to me so much. They are more conscious eccentricities. In comes Mrs. Hudson with a message, or a "commissionaire" with a letter, and we are off. Gregson and Lestrade will get the credit, but we have the fun. Already we are in a hansom rattling through the streets to Waterloo or Charing Cross or Paddington. (Holmes rarely takes train at Euston or King's Cross or Liverpool Street.)

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It is a kind of piety for even the least and humblest of Holmes-lovers to pay what tribute he may to this great encyclopædia of romance that has given the world so much innocent pleasure. Already the grandchildren of Holmes's earliest followers are beginning upon him with equal delight. I was too young to know the wave of dismay that went round the English-reading world when Sherlock and Professor Moriarty supposedly perished together in the Reichenbach Fall, but I can well remember the sombre effect on my ten-year-old spirits when I first read the closing paragraphs of the *Memoirs*. The intolerable pathos of the cigarette-case on the rocky ledge; the firm clear handwriting of that last stoic message! I then put in two or three years in reading everything else of Dr. Doyle's. One walked downtown to the old Enoch Pratt Free Library on Mulberry Street in Baltimore and got out a book—*The Firm of Girdlestone*, or *The Captain of the Pole Star*, or *Beyond the City*, or *A Duet*, or *Round the Red Lamp*, or *The Stark Munro Letters* or *The Doings of Raffles Haw*. For I specialized chiefly in the lesser known tales, and deplore Sir Arthur's tendency (in his autobiography) to make light of some of these yarns. As for *The White Company* and *The Refugees* and *Micah Clarke* and *Uncle Bernac*, these were household words.

But all that time I knew, deep in some instinct, that Holmes was not really dead. In the first place I had noted that the date of his Reichenbach crisis lacked only one day of being my own birthday; and I felt positive that the eve of my festival would not have been marred by the death of my hero. So you may imagine the thrilling excitement—in 1903, wasn't it?—when The *Return* began printing in *Collier's*. Then we saw how Dr. Doyle had got himself out of his predicament. He had revived Holmes, but (to be fair all round) he had killed off Mrs. Watson. We had been tolerant of Mrs. Watson because she was née Mary Morstan in *The Sign of Four*, but obviously she was a little in the way.

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One of the blissful ways of passing an evening, when you encounter another dyed-in-the-blood addict, is to embark upon the happy discussion of minor details of Holmesiana. "Whose gold watch was it that had been so mishandled?" one may ask; and the other counters with "What was the book that Joseph Stangerson carried in his pocket?" Endless delicious minutiæ to consider! There was Dr. Verner, "a distant relative of Sherlock Holmes," who bought out Watson's practice. Undoubtedly this was an Anglicization of the name of Holmes's grandmother Vernet. She was French, a sister of the French military artist of that name. (A real and very distinguished family of painters, incidentally; undoubtedly suggested to Doyle by his own artistic family inheritance. I wonder if the Vernet family in France realize that the world-famous detective has thus been grafted onto their genealogy?) Or there are the glimpses of Moriarty to be talked over: his youthful treatise on the binomial theorem "which had a European vogue." Or Mycroft Holmes, seven years older than Sherlock; we would gladly have heard more of him and of the Diogenes Club. How was it that Dr. Watson happened to cherish a portrait of Henry Ward Beecher, but had never had it framed? Or we might air a minor grievance that the devoted Mrs. Hudson had never been implicated in a mystery of her own. There was a mystery about a landlady, but a certain Mrs. Warren was brought in for the purpose. And why did Gregson and Lestrade gradually fade out of the picture? Why does Billy the page-boy remain only a phantom? Holmes speaks once of having been at college: what college was it?

Such are the questions that the Holmesians argue with innocent satisfaction. Even in the less successful stories we remain untroubled by and naiveté of plot; it is the character of the immortal pair that we relish. It is not mere chance that they are well-loved. Doyle himself must have been a singularly lovable man. There is an anecdote in his *Memories and Adventures* that reveals very clearly the fine instinct of delicacy in his massive personality. He was visiting George Meredith in the latter's old age, and they were walking up a steep path to the little summerhouse Meredith used for writing. In Doyle's own words:—

> The nervous complaint from which he suffered caused him to fall down occasionally. As we walked up the narrow path I heard him fall behind me, but judged from the sound that it was a mere slither and could not have hurt him. Therefore I walked on as if I had heard nothing. He was a fiercely proud old man, and my instincts told me that his humiliation in being helped up would be far greater than any relief I could give him.

I can think of no truer revelation of a gentleman than that.

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The character of Holmes, Doyle has told us, was at any rate partly suggested by his student memories of Dr. Joseph Bell of the Edinburgh Infirmary, whose diagnostic intuitions used to startle his patients and pupils. But there was abundant evidence that the invention of the scientific detective conformed to a fundamental logic in Doyle's own temper. The famous case of Oscar Slater was one example; another was his ingenuity in transmitting news of the war in cipher to British prisoners in Germany. This he did by sending books in which he had put needle-pricks under various printed letters so as to spell out the desired messages; but beginning with the third chapter, believing that the German censor would examine the earlier chapters more carefully. Of his humor there is a pleasant income tax story. In his first year of independent medical practice his earnings were £154, and when the income tax paper arrived he filled it up to show that he was not liable. The authorities returned the form with the words *Most Unsatisfactory* scrawled across it. He returned it again with the subscription *I entirely agree*. As many readers must have guessed, *Round the Red Lamp* and *The Stark Munro Letters* were very literally drawn from his own experiences in medicine.

"Art in the blood is liable to take the strangest forms," Sherlock Holmes once remarked. Undoubtedly Doyle was thinking also of his own inheritance (both artistic and Irish) and certainly he himself, though he looked so solidly Watsonian, gave his friends many surprises in the mutations of his vigorous career. One of the quaintest of these must have been his collaboration with Barrie in an operetta. Of the final spiritualist phase only those who have made careful study of those problems can profitably speak. But there was no stage of the life, from the poor student doing without lunch to buy books to the famous author enduring painful hostility for his psychic faith, which did not reflect the courage, the chivalry, the sagacity we would have expected from the creator of Holmes. Certainly it was characteristic of that student of mysteries to attack the greatest one we know.

Those of us who in earliest boyhood gave our hearts to Conan Doyle, and have had from him so many hours of good refreshment, find our affection unshakable. What other man led a fuller and heartier and more masculine life? Doctor, whaler, athlete, writer, speculator, dramatist, historian, war correspondent, spiritualist, he was always also the infracaninophile—the helper of the under dog. Generous personality, his virtues had always something of the fresh vigor of the amateur, keen, open-minded, flexible, imaginative. If, as Doyle utterly believed, the spirits of the dead persist and can communicate, there is none that could have more wholesome news to impart to us than that brave and energetic lover of life.

A blessing, then, on those ephthalmic citizens who did not go to that office at 2 Devonshire Place, near Harley Street, where in 1891 Dr. A. Conan Doyle set up consulting rooms as an eye specialist. It was there, waiting for the patients who never came, that he began to see the possibilities in Sherlock Holmes. No wonder that Dr. Watson too sometimes rather neglected his practice.

CHRISTOPHER MORLEY.

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BOOKS OF SPECIAL INTEREST

Auditing America

PROSPERITY—FACT OR MYTH. By STUART CHASE. New York: Charles Boni. 1930. 75 cents.

Reviewed by C. E. WARNE
University of Pittsburgh

IN his inimitable style, Stuart Chase here passes in review the American economic life of the period 1922-1929. His effort is to ascertain the extent of the much-heralded prosperity of this era. Statistics are amassed from Lynds' "Middletown" and "Recent Economic Changes" of the National Bureau of Economic Research to demonstrate the plight of the farmer, the insecurity of the industrial worker, the decline of the corner grocer, and the rise and fall of blue chip stocks. The result is a readable volume.

At the outset, an increase, for the period, of *per capita* income of twenty per cent is recognized, due, it is urged, not to Prohibition or to the Federal Reserve System but rather, in the main, to the growth of motor industry upon which now rests the livelihood of three and a half million workers. The rise of instalment purchases, the restriction of immigration, the spread of intelligent management, and the plight of Europe are stated as contributing factors in the advance.

But who shared in this prosperity? Chase's answer is that New England, the South, the Middle West, and the mountain states received depression as their lot. Indeed, stripping off coal mining, textile manufacturing, shipbuilding, and agriculture as unprofitable pursuits, the number benefiting becomes smaller. Adding to this list the small shopkeepers and the unemployed, brings the advantage to an even narrower group. Among those rewarded were the large corporate owners whose profits advanced on the average during the period more than sixty per cent and the industrial workers who had jobs in favored industries. They, on the average, cut five hours from the working week, received somewhat better housing, slowly rising wages, and an opportunity to flood the highways with instalment payment cars.

Prosperity is thus spotty. Among American workers it has largely meant the lessening of a deadening poverty which still holds in its grasp two-thirds of our entire work force. Talk about two car garages remains unintelligible to the average unskilled worker who receives 43 cents an hour or $1,032 a year (1928). Even the average employee in manufacturing industries with his income of $1,362 (1925) is scarcely a likely candidate—even for a Ford. Unless, of course, the purchaser is willing to forego a part of the altogether inadequate income available for food, clothing, and housing. And such is all too frequently the case. "More radios and vacuum cleaners—smaller living quarters. More silk, rayon, and fur, less meat, flour, and cereals. More motor cars, more mortgages. More gasoline, less shoe leather. More movies, fewer lectures and theatres."

But, above all, runs optimism. "Prosperity is a rate of advance." Output is increasing, costs have been lowered, waste products have been reclaimed. Mergers are the order of the day. The tempo of living has quickened. By 1950, the prediction runs, America will have doubled its *per capita* income—if only prosperity holds out.

> Given a free hand, (technology) might abolish poverty, immeasurably diminish the stresses and strains which have dogged every step of the industrial revolution since the days of Watt. It might flood the nation with essential and even beautiful goods at a fraction of their present cost, raise the curse of Adam, and lay the basis for, if not positively usher in, one of the noblest civilizations which the world has ever seen.

But will this happen? Chase is doubtful. Vested interests, "floundering in a pecuniary economy," seek to restrict output, to waste resources, change styles, and engage in high pressure merchandizing. There is no articulation of production to consumptive needs. Prosperity becomes the word of the philologist, not of the engineer.

And so, in closing, Chase turns to the technician for a solution, suggesting a national system of super-management which would bring our complicated economic structure under rational control. "The technician is the modern Prometheus in chains."

But will this Prometheus break his chains? This question repeatedly arises. Or is the master of our order, the pecuniary strategist, increasing in power? What and do mergers serve if not "stabilization" of production and the securing of a differential advantage in the market? And what evidence is there that engineers are not wedded to absentee ownership of corporations? Many questions of this type occur to one as Chase concludes his audit of America. How to attain prosperity is still in doubt.

This much, however, may be said—If Chase does not give us the solution to the riddle, he has at least avoided most of the pitfalls which have snared many other prosperity census takers. His statements do not suggest the dreamy sentimentalism characteristic of the Committee on Recent Economic Changes of the President's Committee on Unemployment. Nor does he herald our economic system as a machine that needs only a carburetor adjustment to maintain a healthy rate of advance.

One would, nevertheless, quarrel with Chase in his interpretation of the Messianic position of the motor industry. Is it not true that a workable economic system would be expected to maintain full employment of labor, and capacity production without the intervention of a spectacular invention? Must a miracle always happen? Would the three and a half millions associated with automobiles be of necessity walking the streets if that industry had not developed? I doubt it. If the flow of money into consumption markets is at any time adequate, the nation's work force is speedily absorbed in the channels of the purchases. The crux of the prevailing ill-balance and consequent idle capacity and unemployment lies in the distribution of wealth and income. If the flow of money demand is kept properly balanced as between capital equipment and articles for consumption it would not be necessary to throw six billions of savings into instalment loans to unclog retail channels.

Much of the marketing waste, so disturbing to Chase, is the result, not the cause, of the ill-balance. Release purchasing power more largely into hands that will buy furniture, bread, and radios, and one need not be so concerned over expanded factories, idle workers, super-salesmen, or augmented advertising programs.

The Human Body

YOURSELF, INC. The Story of the Human Body. By ADOLPH ELWYN. New York: Brentano's. 1930. $3.50.

Reviewed by LOGAN CLENDENNING

THE anatomy and physiology of the human body are here clearly described for non-medical readers. There are about 320 pages, divided into seventeen chapters, with seventy illustrations. No account of diseases or disease processes is attempted. The statements made are always reliable and orthodox.

The first chapter is a short historical résumé of anatomical progress. Two chapters follow the embryological development of the fertilized human ovum, and the finer structure and behavior of the cell. Then tissues or membranes, the structures which are the result of the union of many cells of the same kind, are described. The "building trades" or bones and tendons, the "transport workers" or blood: the engines of the human body or muscles, the transportation system or heart and vessels; the digestive tract and utilization of food, the utilization of air and disposal of garbage, and the central government or nervous system are then considered. Finally chapters on the ductless glands and the reproductive system complete the account. As can be recognized from the chapter titles Dr. Elwyn treats the various systems on the basis of their comparisons to familiar industrial machinery.

The style in which the book is written is somewhat monotonous. It might have been lightened by illustration, anecdote, or pleasantry, or a more narrative form. It is as severe as an elementary textbook of high school physiology which, indeed, it strongly resembles. A pious chapter looking forward into the blessed future completes the volume. Many statements in this closing chapter are both debatable and pernicious, typical of the shoddy ballyhooing of half-baked nostrums which has characterized the medical profession in the past twenty years. Few experienced clinicians could endorse the statement that the Xrays have transformed "guess work into certainty," for the rays have quite as often confused the issue, and slavish dependence upon them has made many medical men parasitical slugs as diagnosticians. "The noted achievements of Freud" had best be referred to with a blush of shame by neurologists for some time to come.

The book on the whole, however, seems to me to be competent.

The Cabinet in England

THE CABINET COUNCIL OF ENGLAND IN THE SEVENTEENTH AND EIGHTEENTH CENTURIES. Volume I. By EDWARD RAYMOND TURNER. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press. 1930. $7.50.

Reviewed by DAVID HARRIS WILLSON
University of Minnesota

SEVERAL years ago Professor Turner published two large volumes dealing with the decline of the English privy council in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. He now turns to the rise of the cabinet during the same period. The present volume carries the cabinet through the seventeenth century and up to the reign of George I; while another, a study of the cabinet in the eighteenth century, is promised for 1931. It is to be hoped that the tragic death of the author a few months back will not prevent the publication of the final volume of this important work.

Professor Turner traces the origin of the cabinet in England to the famous committee for foreign affairs which first appeared in the last years of the reign of James I. This committee, composed of a small and intimate group of royal advisers and favorites, began as a standing committee of the privy council but was gradually to assume the functions of the council as a whole, leaving to that body a mere formal and lifeless existence. While thus accepting the committee for foreign affairs as the origin of the cabinet, the author confesses that in these early days there might have been an even smaller group running the government than that which was represented by the committee (a point which might have been followed further). The foreign committee, as well as the entire council, disappeared in the tumult of the civil wars and the experiments of the Interregnum were unimportant in the question of cabinet origin. As soon as Charles II became king, however, he revived the old committee for foreign affairs, composed again of the most trusted advisers of the crown and supplanting more definitely than ever the privy council as a whole. This committee Professor Turner identifies with the early cabinet. The committee underwent numerous vicissitudes of name and fortune. It was dissolved in 1679, due to attacks upon its secret and absolutist character, only to reappear at once under the title of a committee of intelligence. After 1681 it again became known as the committee for foreign affairs or simply as "the committee." A few years later it was merely called "the committee" and its members "the lords of the committee," terms which lasted until the reign of George I when the word "cabinet," used more and more frequently since the Restoration, supplanted all others. This volume does not carry the story beyond the accession of George I.

All this Professor Turner traces in the greatest detail, heaping illustration upon illustration and footnote upon footnote in the most impressive manner. His industry has been prodigious. He has worked through the whole field of unprinted materials for his period in English libraries and private collections, paying special attention to the reports of foreign ambassadors to their home governments, a mine of information too often overlooked. Contradictory evidence (and there is much of it) is fully presented and dealt with in the spirit of an honest seeker after truth.

The reviewer hesitates to criticize the work of one who cannot answer. But he feels that, quite apart from conclusions, the structure of this book and the method of presentation are clearly at fault. The author begins by tracing the history of the committee for foreign affairs and its successors, without saying much about their connection with other parts of the government. He then retraces his steps and collects early references to "cabinet" and "cabinet council," again without much interpretation of their significance. Next Mr. Turner shows that all the Stuart kings ruled with the aid of a few favorites and intimate advisers, an obvious but all-important factor in cabinet growth. He then begins at the first of the century once more and demonstrates that the allusions to the committees for foreign affairs and the allusions to the cabinet refer for the most part (and more certainly after the Restoration) to the same body. Such a disrupted presentation conceals as well as expounds. Transitions and conclusions can only be seen by turning continually from one chapter to another. Nor does the section on favorites and close advisers sufficiently link up institutional and political development. It would seem that one synoptic weaving of these various threads might have produced more conclusive results.

This arrangement also makes the book too long. And the mass of details and contradictory evidence frequently leaves the reader in confusion. It is as if the weighing and sifting of historical data usually done in the student's closet were here transferred to the printed page. This, then, is a book which will be absolutely necessary to the future student of the cabinet. But it cannot be called a clear or convincing interpretation.

In the Tradition

SEED OF THE MOON. By CALE YOUNG RICE. New York: The Century Co. 1929. $2.

Reviewed by DAVID MCCORD

THIS is Mr. Rice's twentieth book of verse. It contains two fairly long poems and numerous shorter pieces. As in much of his poetry, the face of the sea is constantly and pleasurably visible to the reader. His longer poems, unfortunately, suffer through obvious comparison with the work of Robinson Jeffers ("The Loving Shepherdess," for example), a stronger and more enduring poet. Yet in its own right "Life Goes On" is a powerful little drama enacted, like Jeffers's, on the shores of the Pacific. "Lorna Quade," another variation on the theme of birth, is less interesting as drama, in spite of a Florida hurricane, and essentially less poetic. They are both worth reading.

Mr. Rice is of the older school of poets. His tradition is fundamentally classical. He is honestly preoccupied with simplicity, though he is often inclined to say certain old things in obviously old ways. He exercises admirable control and is an evidently competent craftsman. He is (not a damning word!) homely. He holds, I imagine, little interest for such modernists, even, as have not gone beyond Housman and Yeats. One does not read him with a rising pulse. We feel, as Emerson said of Tennyson: "Most of his poems . . . are only the sublime of magazine poems." What is the warrant of poetry? We do not know; but this is a poem:

COUNTRY NIGHT

Of course there's a tree to listen to,
And stars if you can hear them,
And cattle breathing in the byre,
And an ash falling from the fire.
But what I mostly turn in bed
To hear is the early wheat,
Growing in the north meadow
Under the late sleet.

It isn't so much what it says
I listen to—not that;
But just to the sound of growing
Without thinking or knowing.
Of course something must tell it how,
But I have lived in cities
Too long to know what does—
And that is a thousand pities.

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SOME RECENT FICTION

A Story Within a Story

THE ROYAL WOMAN. By HEINRICH MANN. New York: The Macaulay Co. 1930. $2.50.

FOR some indefinable reason the name of Heinrich Mann has been obscured, both abroad and in America, by the greater reputation of his brother, Thomas Mann. Last year's Nobel Prize seemed finally to set the seal on this ranking, yet there will remain a considerable party who consider, in spite of the enormous popularity of Thomas Mann's work, that the quieter and less sensational books of his brother contain more lasting qualities and have the better chance of survival. Both are undoubtedly writers of the first rank, and not to be ignored. It is perhaps a little unfortunate for Heinrich Mann that he has had all his life to fight against the immense success of Thomas Mann's first novel, the almost classic "Buddenbrooks," which at once placed him under an immense handicap, never wholly overcome in spite of the many fine things which have come from his pen since then.

In many ways the work of the two brothers is alike. German critics competent to judge have stated that a great similarity of style and texture makes certain passages in their books almost interchangeable. In the realm of invention and initiative, however, it is easy to see that it is Thomas who is the more original and radically inclined of the two. Heinrich Mann's studies of Berlin life resemble the work of certain modern Englishmen in their solidity and strength, while his brother's career, since his creation of the family model in "Buddenbrooks," has featured brilliant and acute analyses of psychology bordering on the abnormal. His heroes are apt to be neurasthenic artist types (as in "Death in Venice," "Tristan," "Tonio Kroger," and the sanatorium of "The "Magic Mountain"). The extreme compression of method in his short stories, and the contrastingly voluminous fulness of his two great novels, prove his mastery of technical requirements.

The novel by his brother Heinrich, published last year in Germany as "Eugenie, oder die Bürgerzeit," and now translated under a very bad title as "The Royal Woman," exerts his claims to an equal ability. The plot is one of those peculiarly Teutonic inventions which involves a symbolic story within a story. Herr Consul West and his wife and some friends act a sort of comedy of the Franco-Prussian War, in which the wife plays the Empress Eugénie, an officer admirer of hers the Emperor William, and a mysterious stranger the fallen Emperor Napoleon III. The scenes of this play are closely interwoven with the actual drama, in which her husband's business affairs are ruined by the agency of the same stranger. It is a sign of Herr Mann's innate conservatism, however, that in the end not tragedy but happiness awaits his heroine despite her inconstancy.

The narrative contains many interesting and subtle passages though as a whole it lacks the tragic effectiveness of Thomas Mann's often more lurid style. It will appeal to a quieter and no doubt smaller public, yet its translation is distinctly a service and Mr. Ashton (who is no doubt not responsible for the title) has performed it exceedingly well.

Peasant Life

THE CRIME OF THE JUST. By ANDRÉ CHAMSON. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1930. $2.

WITH a number of younger writers including Alphonse de Chateaubriant and Jean Giono, M. André Chamson has been cultivating the soil of France as material for fiction. The French have not until recently proved partial to novels of the soil or studies of peasant life, but in the past few seasons a slight reaction seems to have set in, and a larger place than usual is now occupied by the writers of M. Chamson's type. The third of his books to be translated, "The Crime of the Just" deals, like the other two, with Cevenol types. The wealthy farmer who is the principal figure of the story, Councilor Arnal, is something more, however, than the usual type of honest toiler who customarily acts as protagonist in this sort of book. He is also the emblem of rural respectability, to whom all the less fortunate elements of the community apply for help and advice. Regarded as infallible, the Councilor's pride is so great that he and his entire tribe are not unnaturally brought low when in their midst a child, not merely a bastard but also the fruit of incest, is born. Yet the prestige of his authority is so great that even as he is being led to jail for the murder of this child a woman approaches him to ask his help in obtaining a pension for her son.

There is a certain resemblance in the incidents of this novel, less broad in scope but as impressive as was "The Road," to others in M. Chamson's own books and those of his contemporaries. The danger is not so much one of imitation as of a too facile formula, which may speedily reduce their work to the level of the innumerable French novelists of the pseudo-psychological school, who perform endless and boring exercises in the dissection of commonplace love affairs. The temptation to a French writer to develop and exploit such formulas is great, perhaps even greater than in English speaking countries, where the life of a book is longer and the public larger and more varied in its tastes. However this may be, Mr. Chamson's work is sincere and powerful. It is also somewhat cold and inhuman in its treatment of a character once presented, but sentiment plays little part in Gallic letters, and, presumably, equally little in Gallic life, whether it be in the Cevennes or in the more complicated world of Paris. Mr. Van Wyck Brooks has provided his book with a suitably austere and correct, if also somewhat dry, translation.

A Fresh Comedy of Dartmoor

THE THREE MAIDENS. By EDEN PHILLPOTTS. New York: Richard H. Smith. 1930. $2.50.

Reviewed by HENRY WALCOTT BOYNTON

AGAIN Phillpotts returns to Dartmoor, its heaths and tors, its homespun folk so full of earthy desires and earthy wisdom. The curtain lifts as usual on a scene touched with quiet magic:

> Waterbrook Common basked in summer haze and heat though the time was mid-September. Where Oakshoot Woods ran parallel with the waste land, the beeches that fringed them had already taken a tinge of russet and gold upon their green, while sunshine burned through their ranks into the coverts behind and glittered over undergrowth of ancient laurel and holly; but upon the Common light blazed unclouded, with only scattered fir trees to shadow it.

Across this peaceful stage you see moving in a moment the human creatures who are to give it meaning. Not the customary man and woman but three girls, old friends, each of whom consciously or unconsciously approaches the moment of love. Marion Willmington, daughter of a prosperous farmer, is a cut above the others in station and in dress. She is betrothed to a worthy youth whom she has begun to doubt. He is too easygoing, she fears he has not the proper male spirit of combativeness. She hankers for a little more of the fighter and even the caveman.

Lily Carnell, a fair and delicate maid, is about to be forced into marriage with a man she does not love, in order to save her mother from eviction by the landlord, her lover's father. Lily has never inclined toward any man, and fancies herself to be a cold spinster by nature.

Freda Yard is the least handsome but most intelligent of the three. She is frankly interested in men, and has the attraction for them which so often belongs to homely temperamental women. Freda does not fear men or destiny; but she is too clear-sighted to make an easy choice of a mate. Chiefly she hesitates between two men of altogether different mould, a gamekeeper who represents the safety of virtue and a poacher who has all the charms of self-will and lawlessness. And at the end of the book we know no better than at the beginning which of the rivals is going to carry her off.

The destiny of the two others is worked out in the drama. Marion finds that her lover is by no means the easy mark she has turned away from, Lily is rescued from a wrong marriage and led into a right one when the man appears to whom she is able to yield her heart. In the background of this comedy are many of the familiar Dartmoor types, the man of property, the innkeeper who presides over so many sessions of rustic eloquence, the ancient and unlettered philosopher who so shrewdly divines the inwardness of human affairs without help (or hindrance) of booklearning. And especially there is the cunning sportsman Madge, who finds in poaching his thrill of romantic adventure. A jail experience reforms him in practice, but he is still given to arguing for a man's right to do as he likes: "No two people have got the same idea of a straight line, any more than a crooked one. It's all the point of view, Marion, as I drum into the thickheaded folk. I'm patient, because the fools are God's work, and he wouldn't make the larger number so to be if He didn't favor 'em."

These people move by ancient ritual. Madge's vengeance on his faithless wife and her lover takes the form of an old symbolic farce, prepared with the help of all his friends and neighbors. A passage in their discussion of it turns its sly beam on our side of the water:

> "They'd lynch Hody very like if it was America," pointed out Mr. Thomas Putt; "because they take everything far more serious in that nation than what we do. But we've got an ancient land behind us, rich in experience to calm us down and prevent us from feeling too excited about anything."
>
> "A Stag Hunt be a mellow contrivance compared with a lynching no doubt," said Soloman. "but then human life's a lot more sacred in England than in the United States. Murder's just an everyday happening there. I shouldn't wonder if a time was to come in America when they slay poor citizens who carry a pinch of tobacco on 'em. Godliness always aims at your comforts out there."

An Inner Sanctum Novel

I AM JONATHAN SCRIVENER. By CLAUDE HOUGHTON. New York: Simon & Schuster. 1930. $1.

Reviewed by AMY LOVEMAN

THIS is one of the first of the Inner Sanctum novels—new fiction to be issued by Simon & Schuster at the price of one dollar—and is excellent value for the money. The book, bound in stiff paper, with the publishers' emblem enlarged to form a design in a pleasing shade of green for the cover, is printed in clear type on excellent paper, has ample margins and is of convenient size, and is easily the equal, if not the superior, of many volumes put out at more than double its price. It is an admirable contribution to an experiment the economic soundness of which time alone must prove.

As to the novel itself, it is a mystery story, transmuted at the close into a "philosophical allegory." It is written with competence, though its moralizing is somewhat too obvious, its dialogue rather aims at brilliance than succeeds in obtaining it, and its five major characters never emerge into convincing reality. Nevertheless the narrative is interesting, and the plot fresh and ingenious. An atmosphere of mystery is created, and a sense of the pregnance of events is successfully maintained. The characters, though not entirely successful, at least are something more than lay figures, and their conversation, if not notable for originality, has pith and thoughtfulness.

But Mr. Houghton, we think, has committed the unforgivable sin in the writer of mystery stories—he has not played fair with the reader. For while he cleverly creates confusion as to the identity of the Jonathan Scrivener who looms in the background of his tale,—a personality hardly less a figure of mystery to the men and women who have met him than to the secretary who, assuming and carrying on his duties in Scrivener's apartment without having met its owner, finds his life drawn into the orbit of the latter's acquaintance—he achieves that confusion by a trick. We for one resent having our interest betrayed in such fashion. We think so good a book deserves a better ending.

A Story of Hollywood

QUEER PEOPLE. By CARROLL and GARRETT GRAHAM. New York: Vanguard Press. 1930. $2.

Reviewed by RANDOLPH BARTLETT

IT is an excellent thing for an author to approach the task of writing a novel through prolonged prayer and fasting. It is likewise excellent, on occasion, for an author to submerge himself in the lore of the academies. But here is a tale which was obviously conceived amid gleeful whoops, and fabricated throughout in the spirit of utter abandon. Since "Queer People" is a story of Hollywood, this is as it should be.

Many literary excursions to the capital of the moving picture world have been made from time to time, usually by observers who paid the city a brief visit and looked down upon the phenomena with cold and cynical aloofness. The Brothers Graham were not merely members of the colony for many years, but as natives of the orange groves, and newspaper men, were in a position to observe its swift and spectacular growth. The result is a picaresque yarn, intimate and faithful to detail.

The central figure is an irresponsible youth, a reporter by profession, who drifts to California because it is one of the few fields where his erratic record is not known. He discovers the fantastic social microcosm of the studio people and finds himself in his element. All Whitey asks of life are the necessities and the diversions, and in his pursuit of these he penetrates strange places and encounters queer people. His moments of professional success are as casual as his adventures with alcohol and women. Even when he becomes involved in the serious melodrama of a murder his gay outlook never forsakes him, and he finds the arena of the law simply another playground, even though his life is at stake.

Doubtless the spokesmen of the movies will rush out their heaviest artillery in an attack upon this book, declaring that Hollywood is not like that. While it is quite true that the studio colony has many members who are sober, industrious, intelligent, and virtuous, it is likewise true that the Grahams do not deny the fact. Passing these by as having no place in their comedy, they reveal what has long been notorious, but has never before been stated in such an entertaining manner—that the glamour of the screen has drawn to Hollywood a great army of pretenders, wasters, schemers, dawdlers, posers, mountebanks, drunkards, plagiarists, lechers, gamblers, egotists, gold-diggers, and gigolos. And Whitey, the hero, is the gayest of them all.

America has produced little fiction of the picaresque class. Here is one contribution—a book without a moral, seeking neither to prove nor to teach, but merely to entertain the reader with the recital of the adventures of a care-free scamp.

WHILE GONDOLAS PASS. By HELEN MACKAY. Appleton. 1930. $2.50.

This is Venice with a difference—not only seen through the eyes of the natives, as Mr. André Maurois observes on the jacket, but seen through the eyes of the poor. "Venice," writes Mrs. Mackay, "is set for only graceful tragedies, mask, brocade, violin. Misery is oddly staged there. No one should need to tramp those streets of floating dream palaces wearily. There should be no mothers anxious about rents and shoes, no little girls trying not to be hungry."

But there are plenty of them, and the heroine of this tale—Zà-Bi, short for Zampette Bianche, White Paws—seems to have concentrated all the misery of Venice. Eldest of a family in which a child arrived every year, with a worthless father and a mother who was generally too busy having children to do much else, Zà-Bi took on herself the responsibility for the family and lived her life in one of those maniacal addictions to self-sacrifice that are common enough, till a quite possible but still not wholly plausible piece of good luck brings her a happy ending.

Mrs. Mackay writes with grace, delicacy, and economy, and her book is implicitly a devastating critique of Mussolini's population program.

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Round about Parnassus

By William Rose Benét

THE fourth revised edition of "Modern American Poetry" by Louis Untermeyer lies before us. The previous edition contained four hundred and eighty poems. The present one has seven hundred and thirty. The new volume also lists twenty more poets. There are newcomers like Robinson Jeffers, Archibald MacLeish, Joseph Moncure March, Phelps Putnam, and George Dillon. The biographical notes concerning each author have also been brought up to date. This is truly "A Critical Anthology," as it is subtitled. It is easily the best book of its kind. The versatile Mr. Untermeyer is our best modern anthologist, as well as being a notable poet and a brilliant parodist. Harcourt, Brace & Company have made a well-bound book of this fourth revised edition. Doubtless Mr. Untermeyer's similarly revised "Modern British Poetry" is an equally good job, both editorially and from the viewpoint of manufacture. That volume has, however, not yet come to hand.

Mr. Untermeyer's range of choice is wide, and it is entirely proper that the Hoosier poetry of Riley, the colloquialism of Field, the brilliantly clever nonsense of the Carryls, father and son, the "Plain Language" of Bret Harte, the dialect utterance of Irwin Russell, Paul Laurence Dunbar, and our more modern negro poets, such as James Weldon Johnson and Langston Hughes, should share representation with those who have written the King's English. Lighter bards like Bunner, Daly, and Franklin P. Adams illustrate the strength of yet another school. The book ends with Hilda Conkling and Nathalia Crane, now twenty years old and seventeen years old respectively. In general the proportional representation, indicated by the number of poems chosen from each poet, is a fair index of the poet's importance. The newest writers of promise are all included. It is only regrettable that the work of Stanley J. Kunitz was published too recently in book form to be selected from as it surely would have been had the opportunity offered. Otherwise, led by Robinson Jeffers, the others stand forth saliently, MacLeish, Hart Crane, Phelps Putnam, O'Neil, Cowley, March, Warren, and Dillon. There are the other southerners, led by Ransom,—namely, Tate and Davidson. James Whaler, who has come into his own at a late date, is properly here. So is Frank Ernest Hill, who has given us the best poetry of modern flying in our time. We have scarcely a criticism of the choices, though our own would differ somewhat in each case, as is but natural. That is to be expected of slightly different temperaments. Our only cavil is that we think Herbert Gorman's later poetry should have been chosen from rather than that he should be represented merely by "The Fanatic" from his earliest book.

Mr. Untermeyer does a service to American poetry in recalling to the modern reader the merits of certain forgotten writers, Eugene Field's brother, Roswell Martin Field; William Vaughn Moody's friend, Trumbull Stickney; and Alex Rogers, the negro song-writer who made such immortality for the Williams and Walker musical comedy. He again reveals the extent of his study of the whole of American verse. His ear for true poetry, even in the midst of more mediocre work, is acute, his zest for discovery is undiminished. He has freshened his collection by the inclusion of much more than "classical examples," even than those which have grown into minor classics within the last decade. Consequently his anthology breathes vitality. It is a growing tree. May it continue to grow through the years to come!

At 27 East 7th Street resides Henry Harrison, the publisher of a number of new poets, none of whom have yet won their spurs so as to be included in such contemporary collections as Mr. Untermeyer's. Mr. Harrison now proffers us a collection entitled "Singing Davids," which, however, he contends, is "not an anthology, but in a very real sense fifteen individual books in one binding." You might think from that that the book is a tome. Not at all! It is no stouter than the average slim volume of poems. Mr. Harrison also introduces to us in two other books Mrs. Clyde Robertson, author of "They Rise Accusing," and George Scott Gleason, the writer of "This My New England."

Some of the poems of some of the poets in "Singing Davids" have already appeared in various newspapers and poetry magazines. Let us examine these young writers. Isobel Stone leads off. She does not impress us as very individual, and, in "Grave Under Elms," she unconsciously echoes Meredith's line in "Modern Love" with her line "Now here is the spot to dig love's grave." Evelyn M. Watson follows. It is just simply very bad writing to use such phrases as "nature's innate choiring harmonies." She begins another poem by saying

There'll be no moaning of the bar
Because the wind among the shrouds
Will tune the straining cordage of
My skiff:

which is no improvement, certainly, on Tennyson. She has the line "When butterflies make avatars," and rhymes "campanile" with "peal." Edwin Leibfreed's first poem begins, "I, Nancy Hanks, typify all Motherhood—Simple-hearted, home-loving, soul-making Motherhood." His second begins

The cherub has but wings and head;
So likewise soul of Poet—

But the proofreading of this volume is, alas, not entirely free from the reproach that his poet imagined posthumous levels at the printer:

De luxe edition, proudly planned,
They made a travesty.
What author ever could withstand
Proofreader's perfidy?

They slew a sonnet's brave intent,
And cursed an ode with doubt—
They used a word I never meant,
And left a comma out.

Freda H. Hammerslough cannot be said to add new splendors of description to the theme of "The Grand Canyon":

God holds the Canyon in His mighty hand,
He has removed the sea and all is still;
Vast subterranean caverns yawn and stretch
Through endless space and bring a breathless thrill!

Well, those caverns have been there a long time.

Schuyler C. Allman remarks of friendship:

Friends come into our lives,
To enrich them for a while,
And then pass out.

We can vouch for this observation's truth. It happened the other night at a party. We do not, however, feel that Mr. Allman is fully justified in writing the poem "To a Dimple," beginning, "Just a simple little dimple Playing hide and seek with men." Margaret Carter Metcalf, Magdalen Eden Boyle, Jessie G. Eble, and Alice Ferrin Hensy do not offer us much. Pauline Garner Curran, with "The King o' Spain's Daughter," is a trifle better, and here and there Norma Keating is not so bad. Roy Danford Parker ends his "Yesterday and Today" with a disillusioned aphorism:

And now the poets change their style
Still looking for a purse,
But compensation does not come
From writing modern verse.

Margaret McConaughty Hahn does not handle her free verse very well, but she is, at least, brief. Charles Finney Copeland starts off to the tune of "The Old Oaken Bucket" and gives us advice in this and other poems rather in the manner of Edgar A. Guest. Sallie M. Sefrit closes the collection with

Bright twinkling stars spill into space;
The new moon's crescent hangs above;
Each fretting care is smoothed away.
To God my soul expands in love.

Mrs. Robertson, author of "They Rise Accusing," is a member of the Poetry Society of America, of the League of American Penwomen, a Vice President of the Poetry Society of Great Britain, and a Daughter of the American Revolution, as well as other things, many other things. We are sorry to have to say that her verse never rises above the mediocre. George Scott Gleason's "This My New England" is quite a bit better in such straight descriptions in free verse as it displays. We give for an example "Gulls in Flight":

Answering the call of the wind, the wave.
Answering the quest for food, hunger-maddened for trifles of plunder, a herring gut.
Peering in eagerness with jewled eye,
Dipping with pink coral in the white foam,
Racing in an orgy of crusading beaks
Wing upon wing, talon upon talon.
Now lost in a faint mew, a kak-kak
Beyond the thatch of fisher-hut.

And yet—it's a long, long way to Tipperary!

FIRST POEMS. By Philip Henderson. Dutton. $1.50.

There is a very promising touch to some of these free verse poems. Nothing truly outstanding as yet, but experience is related with a certain technical distinction.

IF YOU KNOW WHAT I MEAN. By Joseph Easton MacDougall. Dutton. $2.

Amusing light verse by a Canadian journalist, verse that startles occasionally with flashes of poetry. "Don't Shout; I Hear You Perfectly" is one of the lighter moments that made us laugh out loud, and "Reply to a Letter" is rather a poem.

The Banked Fire

FIRE FOR THE NIGHT. By Babette Deutsch. New York: Jonathan Cape & Harrison Smith. 1930. $2.

Reviewed by Jean Starr Untermeyer

THIS is by far the best of Babette Deutsch's three volumes of poetry, and yet one lays it down with a sigh and a gesture of frustration. For all its excellencies, it leaves one unsatisfied. The mood throughout is one of seriousness, high seriousness, but a seriousness that sinks to sombreness and, at moments, even to drabness. Here are the thoughts of a woman growing older. Miss Deutsch shows a diminution of ardor that is shared by other women poets of her time. But Miss Deutsch's ardor is not replaced by the salty pride that distinguishes Miss Teasdale's later work nor the far-reaching, if febrile, revolt of Edna Millay. Neither does it attain the glowing serenity that illumines Elinor Wylie's last strophes. Youthful passion has been supplanted by a philosophical acceptance of life, but an acceptance and a philosophy that are, for the most part, pessimistic. Even pessimism to be persuasive must be surcharged with vitality. And while one cannot say of Miss Deutsch's work that it lacks vitality, it does lack that excess, that creative superfluity, that makes for magic.

Just what this quality may be is hard to define. But every true artist recognizes it in himself and another; even the layman is thrilled by its presence and left unmoved by its absence. It can be felt in the most delicate pianissimo of a great performer and, once recognized in any medium, leaves the seeker unstirred by anything less than its full vibration.

Miss Deutsch frequently overcomes this lack, notably in the two pieces Sun Bath I and II. The exigencies of space permit the quoting only of a fragment, but even a few lines are enough to show the quality I wish to indicate.

To so dissolve into the mood
Of slow, sun-fired, sun-soothed blood
That the huge earth and the small heart
Move without stop and without start
In one firm rhythm—is to be
Apprenticed to felicity.

These poems wring from what might have been a casual moment such poignance, sensory and supersensory, that it does not require recognition of the experience in the reader to make these hours his own.

Miss Deutsch knows her craft. Whatever her forms—and there is sufficient variety—the verses are neatly made, the phrases true if not exciting. Two widely different sections stand out from the rest of the book: that part called "Portrait of a Young Girl," where in five page-length poems something delicate and quivering is caught in a strong net of words, and the last section, "Time and Spirit," a sonnet sequence concerning the fall of man. This is the high achievement of the volume. With much subtlety of thought and a great deal of skilful handling Miss Deutsch develops her novel theme: that the sense of Time is the serpent in Paradise. The variations of earthly desire, bounded and embittered by the knowledge of time and death are woven through the sequence, never departing in their arabesques from the main argument. Miss Deutsch's levelled wisdom finds its best setting in the grave form of the sonnet and in this sequence her thought is so clear and her exposition of it so deft that one no longer misses the edged intensity vainly besought in the earlier part of the book. It seems to me that Miss Deutsch has entered here a path she would do well to follow. Both heart and mind have been schooled before these poems were made. The discipline is good, but let Miss Deutsch be warned from too much of it. She is still too young to bank her fires to the night.

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Foreign Literature

Toward Understanding

THESE UNITED STATES AND A GLIMPSE OF CANADA. Edited by G. D'HANGEST. Paris: Librarie Hachette. 1929.

Reviewed by HOWARD C. RICE

Ecole du Montcel, France

THE language textbook, though not one of the most obvious of the great variety of influences which shape our mental pictures of foreign nations, is certainly not the least important. In American schools we have a multitude of textbooks which describe a trip to France (with an idiom in every sentence!). If these books do not succeed in teaching the French language, they at least give the students some notions about France. The most inattentive and unwilling pupil studies the map at the back of the book, or looks at the pictures of the Place de la Concorde, Nôtre Dâme, and the quais along the Seine, while his teacher explains the latest idiom. These texts and pictures are, I believe, one of the reasons why Paris is included in the itinerary of every American tourist! The classic reading books have had their influence, too. If a student has read any French at all he has probably read Daudet's "La Dernière Classe." This story, along with Bazin's "Les Oberlé," did its duty as advance propaganda for number eight of Wilson's fourteen points.

To observe the reverse of the picture: what ideas of the United States does a French schoolboy obtain from his study of the English language? In most cases he receives very few notions about the United States. The study of English has always meant the study of English English. The teachers have studied in England; the textbooks have used England as a basis of interest and the French boy has written compositions about visiting Trafalgar Square and Saint James's Park, and not Times Square and Central Park. The grammars occasionally cite an Americanism, such as the pronunciation of the word "clerk" or "baggage" for "luggage." One widely distributed textbook gives the information that the Americans celebrate McKinley's birthday on February 12th, and that one of the American copper coins is worth two cents! As for American authors, Irving's "Sketch Book" has long been among the texts on the official program prescribed by the French Ministry of Public Instruction. Irving, however, is ill-adapted to give any incidental ideas about American civilization. The ideas which a boy retains, after laboriously translating Irving's long and verbose sentences, are a few hazy and sentimental pictures of the Dutch settlers in the Hudson Valley, and perhaps some ideas about rural life and Christmas in England. Selections from Emerson are used in some of the most advanced classes; extracts from Longfellow, Poe, and Hawthorne are optional texts for some of the lower classes. The more recent anthologies of English literature for use in French schools include a brief survey of American literature at the end of the volume. These skeletal surveys do little but repeat the commonplaces of our own most mediocre literary manuals.

This state of affairs seems to be changing. French educators are coming to recognize the fact that information about the civilization and literature of the United States is a legitimate complement to the study of English in their schools. Among other indications of this recognition is the admission of numerous Americans as assistants in English in different French lycées and normal schools. Still more important is the chair for the teaching of the "literature and civilization of the United States" at the University of Paris. This chair is occupied by Professor Charles Cestre, who is the author of an important book on the United States in the Larousse geographical series. At the Sorbonne American literature is no longer a branch of English literature. It has independent standing, and it is now possible to hear lectures on "New England in History and Literature," as well as on "The Poetry of Edwin Arlington Robinson"! In the new programs of 1925, the French Ministry of Public Instruction prescribes that one hour a week be set aside in the modern language classes for the study of foreign civilizations. To the study of British civilization in the English classes, there is added for the first time the study of American civilization. The instructions accompanying the new programs give a brief outline for such a survey.

An anthology to meet the need created by this new requirement has appeared during the past year: "These United States," edited by G. d'Hangest. The author, a professor at the Lycée Condorcet in Paris, has published other English textbooks, including "This England," a companion volume to the anthology under discussion. "These United States" is a selection of texts, chiefly by American authors, designed to give an idea of the traditions, development, and contemporary aspects of American civilization: a self-portrait. The book begins with Drayton's ode "To the Virginian Voyage," and ends with a selection from Waldo Frank's essay, "I Discover the New World." The extracts are varied, but intelligently grouped around certain centers of interest. A group of selections from Nathaniel Morton, Whittier, Hawthorne, and Lowell interpret the Puritan tradition. Audubon, Crèvecoeur, Freneau, and Parkman tell of the frontier and the Indians. Burke, Paine, and Jefferson represent the period of the Revolution. Bret Harte, Parkman, and others carry the reader west to the Pacific. Longfellow, Whittier, and Booker Washington present the problem of slavery and the Civil War. Lowell, Emerson, Thoreau, and Whitman express the growing national consciousness. Finally, various aspects of modern society are described by Arnold Bennett, H. G. Wells, Woodrow Wilson, William James, Carl Sandburg, Henry Cabot Lodge, and others. The choice of selections is not only interesting, but stimulating even to the American reader. The historical and biographical information given in the notes is accurate and appropriate, the several illustrations are well chosen. It would be easy to question the choice of certain passages, to point out certain lacunæ (for instance, the aristocratic tradition of the South is not represented), and to suggest certain additions. Yet such minor criticism shrinks before my conviction that this book does present, if used by an intelligent teacher, an admirable basis for the understanding of some of the factors in the civilization of the United States. It will help to demonstrate Lowell's statement, which M. d'Hangest quotes in his introduction, that "to Americans America is something more than a promise and an expectation. It has a past and traditions of its own." Such an anthology has much to teach the teachers as well as their students. (There is the case of the English teacher who in despair translated the phrase "frontier woodsman" occurring in Irving, as *garde forestier!* It seemed ridiculous and illogical to him. What would a woodsman be doing on the frontier?)

"These United States" is an important and significant book, since it is the first attempt to provide the French schoolboy with a systematic and authoritative survey of the civilization of the United States. (I am not considering the incidental treatment of the United States in the history and geography texts.) It becomes more and more evident that he needs such a survey. It is only too easy for him to think of Americanism, as do many of his elders, in terms of jazz, Fords, tourists, and talkies. The mythology of the American cinema is nearly as well known to him as it is to his American cousins. The possible diffusion and influence of such a book may be very great. It is worthy of notice among the dozens of books about all aspects of American civilization, from factories to cooking, which are constantly being published in France. Though of a wholly different type, it deserves an honorable place beside Siegfried's and Tardieu's books on the United States, as one of the intelligent contributions to Franco-American understanding.

How to Know Montaigne

LES ESSAYS DE MONTAIGNE. Par GUSTAVE LANSON. Paris: Mellottee. 1930.

Reviewed by BENJAMIN WOODBRIDGE

IN America this book would have been called "Montaigne: How to Know Him." An admirable introduction for the novice, it will prove to the mature student a valued commentary by its presentation of the evolution of the author's protean thought. A critical spirit in search of a method,—there is Montaigne entire, says M. Lanson,—and he invites us to join in the pursuit. The first, so-called Stoic, period leans heavily on Seneca, but Montaigne was Stoic neither by mind nor by temperament. He sought a moral gymnastic to counteract fear of death and as a prop for his essential epicureanism. Plutarch revealed to him the fascination of the study of man as a moral being, and he was careful to lose no fruit of his own experience. Thus traces of his early philosophy remain to the end, and Corneille's stoical theory of the will is clearly foreshadowed in certain of the later essays. His second stage, skepticism,—in reality a keen sense of relativity and of the impossibility of reaching absolute truth,—perhaps implanted by his observation while a municipal magistrate, left even more lasting effects in his book. It kept his action always in the conservative middle path, while allowing free rein to his thought.

The definitive philosophy of the Essays is the quest of a rational method of enriching and enjoying life to the utmost. Reason and experience are our only guides: both are terribly fallible and treacherous. Hence Montaigne proceeds cautiously, using himself as the matter he can control most accurately. "He has proposed to think and act reasonably, and he indicates the road he has followed." M. Lanson has profited by the most recent investigations to insure an exact portrait of Montaigne and of his time, but the chief value of his study is the order and coherence he has brought into the chaos of his author's thought. This is accomplished by generous and judicious quotation, always accompanied by approximate date of composition, so that Montaigne is made his own expositor. He appears amazingly modern. Has he not anticipated even the contemporary interest in the subconscious as he notes his sensations after a nearly fatal fall from his horse? M. Lanson sketches the varying interpretations which successive generations have given to the Essays. In his last pages he suggests what the twentieth century may learn from them.

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Points of View

In Response to Mr. Colton

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review:*
Sir:

Mr. Arthur Colton's assertion in your issue of July 19th that "Chaucer needs no translation" may seem to dispose with delightful simplicity of a knotty problem. I am pleased to see that Mr. Colton tacitly acknowledges the problem. As I pointed out several months ago in *The Saturday Review,* Chaucer is not being widely read. And though he rivals Shakespeare in interest (of course in a narrower field) and even excels him in sheer companionability, he will in my opinion not be generally known through the original text of his poems alone.

Mr. Colton is as unwilling as I am to leave Chaucer in the original. The difference between us is that I have believed in translating Chaucer while Mr. Colton believes in "editing" him. This proposal is of course not new (see, for instance, Charles Cowden Clarke's edition of 1835), but it is the only alternative to a verse translation except a prose version, and I should like to point out what it does and means. I feel sure that Mr. Colton is not aware of the really devastating character of his proposal.

We can only judge sensibly of this proposal to edit if we keep its supposed function clearly in mind. What is this function? Obviously, to acquaint the general reader with Chaucer's poetry. With this firmly in mind, let us see what happens when the editing begins.

Mr. Colton proposes to take the original text and keep to it as closely as possible. This is the virtue of his method—it is supposed to give the greatest possible amount of Chaucer. But he will change the text (as indeed he must for intelligibility) in four ways. First, he will indicate accents when these are different from modern English. Next, he will indicate by diæresis certain syllables which would not otherwise be pronounced. Third, he will give a running gloss for words the meaning of which is not clear. Finally, he will modernize spelling where he can, leaving old spellings where rhyme or syllabication demands.

When we have put these processes to work, I wonder how close we are to the original Chaucer. Accents by themselves would make little trouble, but with diæreses and glossorial notes they give a text that is calculated to annoy and dazzle the reader. No other poetry alleged to be fit for reading has been so barbed and studded with printer's war-gear. Here, for instance, are a few lines from "The Knight's Tale," treated as I should guess Mr. Colton would have to treat them:

And in his gear[1] for all the world he fared-ë
Not only[2] like the lover's malady-ë
Of Erës[3], but rather like many-ë[4]
Engendered of humoúr malencolic;
Beforën[5], in his cellë[6] fantastic.

1. mood
2. not so much
3. Eros
4. mania
5. in the fore part of the head
6. cells

It will be observed that even with the gloss the meaning of this passage does not come out easily. Perhaps this is exceptional, though I believe hundreds of parallels could be found. One is the first lines of the Prologue, where we have trouble with rhyme (according to Mr. Colton's version—liquor, flower, e. g.), in addition to the other difficulties.

All these elements make an "edited" Chaucer of this sort very difficult reading. But the spelling completely finishes the scheme. Its merit, remember, is supposedly that in a fashion it keeps the original. This, I submit, is lost as soon as the power and flow of Chaucer are lost, and these are already lost with the mutilating effect of accent, diæresis, and gloss. No one can read his Chaucer smooth against these impediments, and Chaucer is one of the most suave and accurate as well as one of the most direct and simple of poets. And yet with Mr. Colton's scheme Chaucer is twice lost. For the original is literally smashed again once the spelling is modernized. How can we change "sote" to "sweet," "persed" (pair-said) to "pierced," etc., without destroying the whole music of the poet? And if a poet's music is gone, where is the poet? Of course, the modernized spelling is simply a monstrosity—it is certainly not Middle English, and quite as surely not modern English. It is disruptive, puzzling, and ludicrous.

Let me give one more brief example of its effect—the last couplet of the first paragraph of the Prologue. This runs in the original:

The holy blisful martir for to seke,
That hem hath holpen, whan
that they were seke.

The second line is in its casual way remarkably melodious. What would happen to it it if edited?

We should immediately clash as to rhyme. Either we modernize the first "seke" to "seek" and the second to "sick," in accordance with meaning, and lose both the melody and the exactness of rhyme, or we use a gloss. Also, if we will retain melody, we must leave the second line exactly as it is, for every modernized word would be a loss. Imagine

That them hath holpen, when that they
were sick-,ë

for instance, and note the loss in alliteration if "them" is used for "hem," and the loss in vowel fulness if "when" displaces "whan," and "sick-ë" displaces "seke." This is certainly not Chaucer's music. Then is it Chaucer?

Now the chief reason (and there are many) for regarding the original text as insufficient (and God knows I wish everyone could and would read Chaucer in the original) is that it offers impediments which obscure the mastery and maturity of Chaucer as a poet and a discerning observer of life. Students seldom spend more than a year on it, yet they cannot "pick it up" in a year—they can only begin. They are still bumping into subtle difficulties every time they read, like someone trying to enjoy Racine or Goethe with two years' college French or German. But an "edited" text does not solve their problem. They cannot read freely. In fact, I wonder if the impediments in such a version are not almost as great as those of the original. Also, as I have shown, the reader reads something that is wrong. All this is vicious, but the more so because the pretense is that here is Chaucer complete.

A translation, on the other hand, has clear defects and merits. It cannot reproduce the original, but it can give the exact sense, the flow, and much of the accent and rhythm of the original. And it gives a consistent poem, not a mutilated one. This, of course, assumes the translation to be well done. Perhaps mine is not. But it can be. And in a translation, which is always supplementary to the original, lies the only possibility of giving Chaucer to general readers. Millions of such will be lucky to get the time and desire to read him without special difficulties, as they read Masefield or Whitman or Shakespeare. They need a modern Chaucer, and they will not get it in a version that trips, halts, and mispronounces them out of patience and comprehension.

FRANK ERNEST HILL.

New York City.

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review:*
Sir:

It may interest Mr. Arthur Colton to know that in the past year I have tried to interest several publishers in the idea of reprinting the works of Chaucer, or at least the "Canterbury Tales." I cannot join in his denigration of Frank Ernest Hill's translation, which seems to me an achievement successful beyond possible anticipation. But Mr. Hill is not likely to undertake a redaction of the entire body of Chaucerian poetry; the labor would be great, and the proprieties of the present age would forbid the inclusion of certain of the tales in a modern language canon. Besides, a translation is not exactly Chaucer.

Now I read Chaucer in an edition lent me—nearly twenty years ago—by Mr. Edwin Markham. It was, if memory serves me, Gilfillan's edition of Tyrwhitt's edition; and it seemed to me to solve all the problems which supposedly make Chaucer inaccessible to the modern reader. Here and there, I suppose, words were modernized or given, at least, in a somewhat less antique form; but for the most part the words and the spelling were Chaucer's. By correcting the mistakes of scribes and early editors, however—by pulling apart words that had been improperly joined—by the discreet use of diacritical marks to indicate pronunciation, accent, and feminine endings—reading had been facilitated until it was but little more difficult than the reading of Shakespeare. Yet it was Chaucer; and all the additional charm of the archaic was there to flavor the reading. It is impossible after all these years to describe the edition I refer to any more precisely; but to confirm my impression that it made the reading of the Canterbury bard wonderfully and beautifully easy, I have only to turn to the Skeats edition and despair over its difficulties.

If Mr. Colton can locate a set of Gilfillan's Tyrwhitt's Chaucer, he may find what he has been looking for. Perhaps Mr. Markham can tell us more about it. And it seems to me that publishers, in failing to reprint Chaucer in such an edition, are simply overlooking a great opportunity.

SHAEMAS O'SHEEL.

Brooklyn, N. Y.

And Now the Apology

Owing to the fact that Mr. Colton's recent letter, "Chaucer in Translation," was set up from manuscript instead of typewritten copy, numerous errors crept into the text as printed. We print below corrected versions of the original Chaucer and of Mr. Colton's supposed Lounsbury rendering of a famous passage. The lines of poetry later quoted in Mr. Colton's letter, which were brought together as though forming a stanza, should have been separated in every case the one from the other.

CHAUCER:

Whenne that April with his shours sote
The droughte of March hath perced to
the rote,
And bathed every veine in swyche licour,
Of which vertue engendred is the flour,
Whan Zephirus eke with his sote brethe
Enspired hath in every bolt and hethe
The tender croppës, and the youngë sun
Hath in the Ram his halfe cours of yronne.

LOUNSBURY:

When that Aprilë with his showers swotë
The drought of March hath piercëd to
the rotë
And bathëd every vein in such licour
Of which virtúe engendered is the flower,
When Zephyrus ekë with his swotë breath
Inspired hath in every holt and heath,
The tender croppës, and the youngë sun
Hath in the Ram his halfë course yrun.

To his supposed Lounsbury renderings of the different lines Mr. Colton appended the statement, "The meaning is just as plain, the poetry is better, besides it is almost pure Chaucer." This in reference to Mr. Hill's translation. The sentence as printed substituted the word "more" for "pure."

—THE EDITORS.

What Makes a Materialist

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review:*
Sir:

Henry Ford, an automobile manufacturer, who makes good automobiles, they say, but who is not worth two cents as a writer, said in one of his recent magazine articles:

"It is the unfortunate man whose mind is continually bent to the problem of his next meal or his next night's shelter who is a materialist perforce. He can't get his mind off the grindstone of material needs. Now emancipate this man by economic security and the appurtenances of social decency and comfort, and instead of making him more of a materialist, you liberate him from the menace of materialism."

This sounds logical. It is the kind of thing that a man who has had no personal experience of grinding poverty might think out in his comfortable study. But as a matter of fact, other things being equal, poverty, and sometimes even grinding poverty, has a tendency to chasten a man, subdue his thoughts and feelings, and set him to thinking about life in terms of spirit and mind rather than in terms of matter. A man who cannot exercise his stomach three times a day can always exercise his mind and soul. Food for his soul can never fail him, for the storehouses of the soul are always abundantly supplied with food. A rich man, on the other hand, or even a man who is well supplied with the material things of life, does not bother much about the mind and soul. His heart is where his treasure is, in his fleshpots and clothes closets.

Of course one cannot generalize about poverty and riches, rich men and poor men. A spiritual-minded man will live temperately and think high thoughts whether he be rich or poor; whereas a gross-minded man will live gluttonously on bread and water. However, a certain amount of poverty in a man's life tends to elevate his thoughts and wean them away from material things. "The soul that goeth stooping and feeble, the failing eyes, the weak knees, and the hungry soul, shall give Thee praise and righteousness, O God."

CHARLES HOOPER.

Coeur d'Alene, Idaho.

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CONFESSIONS OF ZENO

By ITALO SVEVO

This is the great modern Italian novel. Slightly mad Zeno, accomplished hypochondriac, writes the engaging story of his life for a psychoanalyst. No one likes reading galley proofs (strips of paper about seven inches wide and over two feet long), but on my last trip to Europe galleys of the English Edition were given to me, and once started I found the novel so absorbing and Beryl de Zoete's translation so excellent that I read it in trains, hotels, on board ship, in fact wherever and whenever I had the time. It is fascinating. I enjoyed it more than any novel that I have read in the past year, and it is a pleasure to find that the leading European critics unite in calling *Confessions of Zeno* a masterpiece.

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The New Books

The books listed by title only in the classified list below are noted here as received. Many of them will be reviewed later.

Fiction

AXELLE. By PIERRE BENOIT. Dial. 1930. $2.50.

The stories of Pierre Benoît have been best-sellers in France for many years. No railway book-stall is complete without "le nouveau Benoît," and his success has only been equalled by the rapidity of his production and the variety of his subjects. "Königsmark" and "L'Atlantide" have had their thousands of readers and their millions in the world's movie audiences,—the latter, in fact, had an almost unexcelled popularity as an adventure novel, reviving the Jules Verne tradition. "Axelle" is one of the Benoît's later and less popular books, the post-war history of a war-prisoner's romance with a fair enemy. In a prison camp near Königsberg the French sergeant Dumaine meets and falls in love (after appropriate ponderings and hesitations) with a local chatelaine, Fräulein Mirrbach. In the gloomy castle of Reichendorf in which she lives the Frenchman seems to enjoy unusual liberty of entry while against a background of warlike alarums the drama of these two pawns in an international struggle is played out to its obvious conclusion.

M. Benoît's book is more notable for its broad viewpoint and bold admission that in spite of propaganda to the contrary the German nation may have contained a few exceptional individuals worthy to rank as human beings, than for any great literary merit. It is written in a straightforward, serviceable style, and some of its descriptions of prison camp life seem authentic, though the melodramatic character of the Prussian general is in the old tradition. Not an important book, nor a particularly interesting one, it yet serves to class its author among the rapidly increasing party in France which tends to advocate a wary, but quite definite, *rapprochement* with Germany. The unnamed translator has done his work none too well, confusing place names with the names of Russian generals, past tenses with future, and showing on the whole extreme vagueness as to what it is all about.

THARLANE. By DOROTHY COTTRELL. Houghton Mifflin. 1930. $2.50.

Mrs. Cottrel's novel of Australian sheep-farming has something of the immensity and crudity of the continent about which she writes. Her story is in the main concerned with unsentimental things, yet she contrives to sentimentalize about them, though always very much in the grand manner and without descending to prettiness. Her central character is a sheep farmer and a rascal, old in experience, far from sympathetic, yet viewed by the author through a swimming haze of pathos. His story, said to be founded on an actual legend of the Australian brush, is an ample one, which Mrs. Cottrell tells, in the main, competently. His struggle to make something out of an immense wilderness, defeated after years of effort by fire,—a fire set by a vengeful lunatic to whom he has been unjust in the past,—has in it the elements of a far better book than "Tharlane" actually is.

The explanation for this lies, probably, in Mrs. Cottrell's undisciplined style and the weakness of much of her secondary plot, which tends to make the book as a whole too long, diffiuse, and overwritten. All this seems unfortunate, since she obviously has the material and the enthusiasm for her subject necessary to produce a first rate novel. In only one minor instance,—the love story of Sandy and Georgina,—do her methods seem adequate to fill out the almost epic outline she has traced for her book. Perhaps it is not entirely apart from the subject to mention that Mrs. Pritchard's "Working Bullocks" of a few seasons ago, which treated the Australian scene in a similar spirit, more successfully accomplished its purpose, though neither is the adequate novel of Australia that will no doubt be written.

International

RUSSIA: TODAY AND YESTERDAY. By E. J. DILLON. Doubleday, Doran. 1930. $3.50.

It is a little difficult to speak of the venerable Dr. Dillon's book as if it were just another journalist's impressions of Soviet Russia. This unusual Irishman is close to one hundred years old—ninety-six, if we are not mistaken. He was intimately acquainted with the Russia of half a century ago, as professor of Oriental languages and correspondent, and when he visited this country with the Russian delegation at the time of the Portsmouth peace conference, his prestige was such that he was treated almost as a sort of unofficial diplomat.

He weathered the great war, and roundabout 1920 went to Mexico and became a sort of press-agent for General Obregon, and as such, wrote a book about Mexico regrettably out of character with what had been his reputation a generation before. One felt that that incongruous adventure must be the last of Dr. Dillon, and yet here he turns up again, big as life, with a volume on present-day Russia.

It seems that in 1928, he decided, "solely for sentimental reasons," to return to the scenes of his early manhood, and he intended to spend "at least half a year there," but his health broke down and he was compelled to leave. After he had recovered his strength sufficiently, he wrote this book. As a contribution to our understanding of the actualities and significance of Bolshevism, the book is, to be quite frank, of negligible worth. The interesting thing, under the circumstances, is that there should be any book at all.

A curious unreality pervades the whole work. Dr. Dillion speaks of this and that as if he had actually seen and touched it, and doubtless he did, but it is plain that the actualities of revolutionary Russia are not real to him in the sense that they are real to those who are creating them or to those of the present generation who visit Russia. He sees things as a very old man might see young lovers or children at play; not as they exist for the actors themselves, but mainly as they remind him of something that happened in his own life, long ago. It is the 'eighties and 'nineties which are really real to Dr. Dillon in Russia, and constantly he touches the present only to revert to something read or written then.

In his last paragraph, he says perhaps more than in any of the more or less first-hand observations which precede it:

> Bolshevism is no ordinary historic event. It is one of the vast cathartic agencies to which we sometimes give the name of Fate, which appear at long intervals to consume the human tares and clear the ground for a new order of men and things. The Hebrews under Moses and Joshua, the Huns under Attila, the Mongols under Gjinghis Khan, and the Bolshevists under Lenin, are all tarred with the same transcendental brush . . . To me it seems to be the mightiest driving force for good or evil in the world today. It is certainly a stern reality, smelling perhaps of sulphur and brimstone, but with a mission on earth, and a mission which will undoubtedly be fulfilled.

Juvenile

(*The Children's Bookshop appears on page 31.*)

NAVARRE OF THE NORTH. By ESTHER BIRDSALL DARLING. Doubleday, Doran. 1930. $2.

Satiated readers who would gladly see the authors of dog stories torn to pieces by their own ridiculous creations will exempt Mrs. Darling. For she has written a book out of her experience with the kennels which supplied dogs to serve with the Army of the Vosges. Navarre is entirely canine. He cannot talk or send wireless messages, and though he does win one race, it is a short one and can be easily skipped. His master, Paul, is not quite so successful as a boy, the defects being somewhat maternally smoothed over. But Moose Jones, the gold-hearted sourdough, lends a welcome humor to the pages, and we hope that the Ancient and Honorable Order of Bow-Wow Wonder Workers existed, for Nome could never be the same to us without them. What we like about this book is its scope, and its many true word pictures of Alaskan life; what we would like to see is an adult book by Mrs. Darling in which her human beings are as true to nature as her dogs.

WONDER FLIGHTS OF LONG AGO. Edited by MARY ELIZABETH BARRY and PAUL R. HANNA. Appleton. 1930. $2.50.

These stories are the product of times when flights through the air really had magic in them. This magic, however, is by no means destroyed by the fact of airplanes. Even in this generation a trunk cannot fly by itself nor a horse grow wings for Bellerophon.

Surely the particular glamour of the air will never lose its hold. Man has flown in imagination since he first began to dream. Folk and fairy tales echo that craving in every land and time. This book is an illustration printed aptly for the generation that is fully to explore aviation. There are stories from all over the world. The editors have simply collected familiar versions, adding some interesting maps and a glossary. Pegasus and Sinbad are here as well as some gay Oriental tales such as that of the Flying Stool. The illustrations, which attempt to interpret the tales in a modern light, are sometimes suggestive but more often gloomy.

Poetry

CASANOVA JONES. By JOSEPH ANTHONY. Century. 1930. $2.

Casanova Jones was, a gentleman sober, and gentleman blotto, but always a gentleman, that was his motto. He was also a revenue agent. Cass had a wife but she couldn't understand him (though she left out the "under") and so she had banned him. Being, however, an understanding woman along other lines she opened a "place" and permitted Cass, in lieu of alimony, to provide her with authentic medicinal stuff. Consider the bitter and sorrowful life of a revenue man with a bootlegger wife. Casanova sits in his duplex apartment and broods over the heartlessness of women. Are they all brutes? Or do none of them know—he suppresses a sob—Prohibition men also have hearts that can throb? It's about here that the plot begins to enter. On the path to perdition one needs but a shove—His loneliness led to his contraband love.

And Cass, you will be sorry to hear, fell in love with a lady poet whose first, and only, work was entitled "Poems of Passion." In pursuit of this poetess Casanova is led through a long series of adventures into which are injected with catholic prodigality Congressmen a-drinking, soap box orators turned into martyrs for the sake of alcohol, high-life and low-life and prison-life, the society of Water Girls, and the League for Upholding the Stomach Chastity. Cass ends at long and hilarious last as a candidate for Congress.

Fiction in verse and prohibition in spoof, with alcoholicly acrobatic drawings by Willy Pogany. "Casanova Jones" is a book that will be considered a riot by those who like it. There is no doubting its exuberance and spontaneity. The rhymes fairly leap from page to page, changing their metre frequently in the process, and the figures of speech put the flourishing of the old bay tree to shame, and will do the same by conservative readers. One can say with assurance that this book will be a seller since it will be absolutely indispensable to the vast army of incurable quoters of couplets and readers aloud of rhyme and their friends,—if any.

CANDLE GOLD. By *Evelyn M. Watson.* Christopher Publishing House.

SINGING DAVIDS. Harrison. $2.

DAGGERS IN A STAR. Harrison. $2.25.

SONGS OF A DAY. By *Percy Mackaye.* Winter Park, Fla.: Angel Alley Press.

OUT OF CHRYSALIS. By *Christy Mackaye.* Winter Park: Angel Alley Press.

FLAMES OF LIFE. By *Mina Angermueller.* Four Seas. $2.

I ENTER MYSELF. By *Loren H. B. Knox.* Four Seas. $1.50.

BALM IN GILEAD. By *Helene Mullins.* Harpers. $2.

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The Reader's Guide

Conducted by MAY LAMBERTON BECKER

Inquires in regard to the selection of books and questions of like nature should be addressed to MRS. BECKER, 2 Bramerton St., Chelsea S.W.3, London.

Mrs. Winifred Notman Price, Schenectady, N. Y., whose advice I have often found of high value in matters of children's reading, sends these suggestions in the difficult problem of meeting the needs of grown children of slow mentality:

"READING material for slow seventh and eighth grade groups needs thought and much experimentation. Sets of readers, all just alike, are useful (if at all) only for remedial teaching for overcoming specific diagnosed defects. The slow groups even more than others need stimulation to be interested in things outside their own bodies and immediate surroundings. Hence the brief list which I enclose." This is as follows: "Training the Dog," by Will Judy (Judy Pub. Co., Chicago); "About Your Dog," by R. S. Lemmon (Stokes); "What Bird Is That?" by F. S. Chapman (Appleton); "A Course in Piloting, Seamanship, and Small Boat Handling," by C. F. Chapman (Motor Boating); "Buried Cities," by Jennie Hall (Macmillan); "The Earth for Sam," by W. M. Reed (Harcourt, Brace); "An American Farm," by Rhea Wells (Doubleday, Doran); "Cease Firing," by W. Hulbert (Macmillan); "Dick Byrd," by Fitzhugh Green (Putnam); "If I Were King," by J. H. McCarthy (Grosset & Dunlap); "The Book of Courage," by Herman Hagedorn (Winston); "Told to the Children Series" (Dutton); "The Happy Parrot," by Robert Chambers (Appleton); "On to Oregon," by Honoré Willsie Morrow (Morrow); "Lindbergh, the Lone Eagle," by G. B. Fife (Burt); "In Brightest Africa," by Carl Akeley (Star Dollar Books); "Odyssey for Boys and Girls," by A. J. Clark (Macmillan), and all the Church classics; "Skunny Wundy," by A. C. Parker (Doubleday, Doran); "Oh Susanna," by Mead Minnegerode (Putnam); "The Lookout Man," by David Bone (Harcourt, Brace); "On the Bottom," by Edward Ellsberg (Dodd, Mead); the works of J. W. Schultz and Zane Grey; "Young Folks' Picture History of Music," by James Francis Cook (Presser); "Count Luckner, the Sea Devil," by Lowell Thomas (Doubleday, Doran); "The Story History of England," by Elizabeth O'Neill (Nelson); "My Antonia," by Willa Cather (Houghton Mifflin); "The Indian How Book," by A. C. Parker (Doubleday, Doran). For magazines, *Motor Boating*, *Automotive Industries*, *Aero Digest*, *Electrical World*, *Art and Archeology*, *Aeronautics*, and *American Kennel Gazette*.

Mrs. Price has my hearty congratulations on so completely getting away from the practice of playing safe by using ready-made lists over and again. As I understand the problem that the original inquirer had to meet, it was that of stimulating the minds of young people who were slow and dull, and in consequence backward and hemmed in. The fact that I have just sent this very list to a school where the pupils are quite up to standard, and where a gift of money has been received for the purchase of twenty books, has nothing to do with its usefulness for this other, slow set. It is a good list because it meets the demand of adolescence for a wider scene and greater activity. The school to which I have just sent it had applied to four other sources of book information before it came to me, and received in each instance lists it found perfunctory and unsatisfying. I hope it likes this one better.

E. K. L., Urbana, Ill., relays this list of books about the Carolina Coast country from a librarian in Savannah whose special work is historical references.

THEY may thus be taken, by the correspondent in search of such material, as authoritative. "Glories of the Carolina Coast," by J. H. Rice, Jr.; "Historic Houses of South Carolina," by Mrs. H. Leiding; "The Huguenots of Colonial South Carolina," by A. H. Hirsch; "The Spanish Period of Georgia and South Carolina History, 1566-1702," by J. G. Johnson; "History of South Carolina, from Its First Settlement in 1670 to the Year 1810," by David Ramsey; "A Sketch of the History of South Carolina," by W. J. Rivers; "Carolina Chansons," by Du Bose Heyward; "A Woman Rice Planter" and "Chronicles of Chicora Wood," by Mrs. E. W. Pringle; "Black April," "Green Thursday," and Scarlet Sister Mary," by Julia Peterkin; "Porgy" and "Mamba's Daughter," by Du Bose Heyward, and the *South Carolina Historical and Genealogical Magazine*, vol. 31, No. 2, April, 1930, p. 75.

S. M., State Teacher's College, Mansfield, Pa., has been asked for a number of books, preferably novels, dealing with revenge; she cannot get very far with the list, and asks for suggestions.

CAN it be that revenge is no longer in the mode? Novels in which the hero r-r-rolls the r's are all of fairly ancient date: "The Corsican Brothers," "The Man Who Laughs," "The Count of Monte Cristo." Have we no longer strong-jawed spirits like those in "Wuthering Heights," who can cherish a grudge beyond the grave? The feud is out of fashion in America; all that seems left of it is the grisly story in "The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn"—a story that left a permanent sore spot on the memories of my childhood. Have poor and homely ladies found so many avenues of self-expression that they no longer take it out on fate by hating the young and happy, like Balzac's Cousine Bette? Would a lover now go to such ingenious lengths to destroy a faithless lady as those that did away with Valérie Marneffe? Are we still so law-abiding that we carry about with us a personal and private judge, jury, and executioner, to give sinners outside the law as legal a send-off as Athos gave Milady? Convicts may go to their death clasped in a grip of hate, as they did in "Great Expectations," but the hero of Bojer's "The Great Hunger" sublimates his revenge by planting—at night and by stealth—seed in the field of the man whose savage dog killed his child. Perhaps we distrust our technique and fear to bungle the business as badly as Hamlet; possibly we love our dumb friends too well to take, as in "Moby Dick," revenge upon a whale.

It may be, of course, that our better sense has taught us the futility of killing, slowly or otherwise, the thing we love—or once loved. One of the high spots of this London season has been to me the performance of Paul Robeson as Othello; it was the only time that the plot of this tragedy has seemed anything but preposterous to me, and now it is not because I feel that for the first time I have seen Othello and not a slightly tinted Caucasian elocuting blank verse. There was a moment when, meditating the method of Desdemona's taking-off, he slowly and apparently unconsciously opened and held spread his hand—which seemed to measure at least eighteen inches from tip to tip—while his noble voice went quietly, reasonably, on. It was a moment to make one's blood run cold. Yes, I should have to give this play the first prize for a grand unnecessary revenge; for the most complete and devastating it would go to that of the father of Deuceace the gambler—was he not the Earl of Crabs?—in Thackeray's "Yellowplush Papers." For mingled ghoulishness and good-humor this can't be beat. I think the prize for the meanest would be awarded to the one in Strindberg's "The Father," but the neatest would surely be that of Anatole France's Monsieur Bergeret. This philosopher, having borne much and decided at long last that his wife was unbearable, suddenly bethought himself that all there is in your universe is what your mind admits to it. A great light thus dawned; he was able to look serenely through the lady across the breakfast table and see her no more than any other illusion of the senses. The effect on Mme. Bergeret, however, was so upsetting that she had a nervous breakdown and left home.

There is a revenge theme in H. F. M. Prescott's admirable novel of the Middle Ages, "The Unhurrying Chase" (Dodd, Mead). The only unremitting pursuit of a revenge that I have come upon in recent fiction is in J. F. Fletcher's "The Root of All Evil" (Doubleday, Doran)—not a detective story—in which a woman goes into business in a little English town to break a rival shopkeeper who jilted her when she was young. She does so but is herself broken in the end.

I have long suspected that jealousy might be on the wane, at least among gentlemen and exhibited toward ladies. Possibly there may be too many ladies to make it worth while to worry over one. It may be that revenge is too long-winded to suit our touch-and-go times. I speak, of course, altogether from evidence in fiction; police courts might tell another tale. But it is interesting to watch the *crime passionel* losing favor in detective fiction, and to note how often the "amateur criminologist" called to the murder begins by asking who benefited financially by it.

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Facsimile Publications

THE Facsimile Text Society of New York has commenced its ambitious program by issuing five volumes, three in the series devoted to Literature and Language—John Donne's "Biathanatos," reproduced from the copy of the first edition in the Library of Congress, with a bibliographical note by Professor J. W. Hebel of Cornell; Thomas Wharton's "Poems on Several Occasions," *from the edition of 1748, in the* New York Public Library, with a so-called bibliographical note signed F. A. P. that says nothing; and George Washington's copy of "Poems on Several Occasions" by a Gentleman of Virginia, from the apparently unique copy of the 1736 edition in the possession of the Boston Athenæum, introduced by Professor R. L. Rusk of Columbia in a most interesting note: one in the series of Philosophy, *the 1690 translation by Edward* Southwell of Henry More's "Enchiridion Ethicum," from the copy belonging to the Dean of Smith College, Dr. Marjorie Nicolson: and one in the series of Economics, Thomas Mun's "Discourse of Trade from England unto the East-Indies," London, 1621, taken from the copy in the Seligman Library of Columbia. The entire experiment deserves to be encouraged, even though the present volumes are not wholly satisfactory—the pages have the appearance of washed-out blurring that probably cannot be avoided. It should be said for the benefit of collectors interested in acquiring facsimiles that the annual dues of the Society are five dollars. In return for this sum, members are to receive books of their choosing to that amount at the list price of the individual volumes. The members have also the privilege of purchasing additional books at the net price, which is about 33⅓% less than the list price. Membership dues are accumulative; that is, a membership fee may extend beyond one year until enough books have been purchased to exhaust it. Non-members are charged the list price for all books.

G. M. T.

In connection with the laying of the foundation-stone of the new library of Leeds University, the London *Times Literary Supplement* prints in its excellent column, devoted to reports of rare books and auction sales, the following account of the library, and of Lord Brotherton's gift to it:

"Lord Brotherton announced his intention of presenting his own library to the new building, thus adding to what was already a munificent donation estimated to cost £100,000. The new building will contain accommodation for 1,000,000 books, so that in time the Leeds University Library will rank next to the Bodleian and Cambridge University libraries in the provinces. The books will to a large extent be accessible to all properly accredited persons; and the gift of Lord Brotherton's library will be the largest of its kind that has been made since the library of the late John H. Wrenn was presented to the University of Austin, Texas. During the five or six years which the building of the new library will occupy a temporary structure has been erected in the grounds of Lord Brotherton's residence, Roundhay Hall, Leeds, with shelving for many thousands of books.

"Lord Brotherton has been for many years forming a library of books in general literature, and accumulated many thousands of volumes. More recently he has devoted his attention to the acquisition of books forming individual features of particular interest. For instance, his collection of Brontë books, manuscripts, and letters is now unquestionably the finest in existence. His series of the books and manuscripts of Sir Walter Scott is very nearly as complete as it can be made. His collection of Swinburne and of Swinburniana is especially notable; a long series of manuscripts, many of which are unpublished, is accompanied by a large number of autograph letters, while, with two or three exceptions, the series of printed books is complete.

"Side by side with the Swinburnes is appropriately arranged a fine collection of Rossettiana, and with these may be seen rows of books of Tennyson, Browning, William Morris, and other leading authors of the later years of the nineteenth century. Of these the Tennysons in particular include many of the great rarities. One of the authors whose writings have occupied a leading place in Lord Brotherton's attention is Lord Byron; and this is particularly fortunate for in no public library in this country can any adequate collection of his works be consulted. Byron's books have been sadly neglected in the past by those responsible for filling the blanks on the shelves of our public libraries, and now it is almost impossible for anyone to obtain a full series of the books in anything like decent condition except at prohibitive prices. Lord Brotherton is making Byron one of the leading features of his library, and in years to come, when that library finds its final home in the University, Leeds will be able to point to the Byron series as one of its principle glories. Where it can be done Lord Brotherton is adding to the printed volumes important manuscripts and autograph letters. The Byron books are flanked by a series of Coleridge, Wordsworth, Landor, and Shelley books, all of which will doubtless be greatly extended by the time the library is transferred to its permanent home. In very naturally concentrating on the older writers Lord Brotherton has not neglected the greatest of the moderns. He has in particular an exceptionally fine series of inscribed presentation copies of the books of Thomas Hardy, all, or nearly all, of which are accompanied by appropriate holograph letters. Shaw, Wells, Barrie, and Joseph Conrad are all more or less in their places here.

"Lord Brotherton has for some years possessed one of the finest sets in existence of the four Folio editions of Shakespeare; and to these has recently been added a copy of the famous "Poems" of 1640, with a portrait and both title-pages, and in the original sheepskin binding. Pope, Dryden, Gay and Prior are also here in folios and quartos, and here also are many of the innumerable tracts of Daniel Defoe. We are indebted to Mr. T. J. Wise for some facts concerning this remarkable library, the extent and richness of which can only be seen from a fully annotated catalogue, which in the nature of things cannot be possible for some years yet."

Auction Sales Calendar

Union Square Book Shop (30, East 14th Street) New York City. July 29th: Second Sale, *Summer 1930. The items in this* sale were largely autograph letters, manuscripts, and documents of American interest. The sales commenced with two letters from John Quincy Adams, and went on to include a letter of Miss Alcott's; the original manuscript of Thomas Bailey Aldrich's poem, "The Old Grave"; the manuscript of John Burroughs's "Roof-Tree"; the manuscript diary of a sergeant in the Civil War; Mark Twain's *copy of Captain Marryat's* "A Diary in America," second series, with notes and comments in the owner's autograph; Eugene Field's "In New Orleans," New Orleans, 1894; several Lincoln broadsides; the manuscript of Longfellow's poem, "The White Czar"; the three numbers of "The Pioneer," edited by Lowell, Emerson, and Hawthorne, Boston, 1843; the manuscript of James Russell Lowell's poem, "A Mood," *the first ten lines of the poem, followed by four lines of comment*; a fragment of a Shelley letter; a collection of autographs of famous American pioneers for Women's Suffrage; and a letter from Whistler to Edmund Gosse.

On Friday, the 25th of July, there were sold at Sotheby's in London, an unusually fine group of books. There was an apparently unrecorded edition of "A Subpoena from the High Imperial Court of Heaven," London, 1623, attributed by the Britwell catalogue to Lancelot Andrews, unbound, uncut, and with the original wrappers and stitching: "The Memorable Maske of the two Honourable Houses or Inns of Court," by George Chapman and Inigo Jones. Lon-

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don, [1613]; Sir Edward Coke's "Little Treatise of Baile and Maineprize," London, 1635; Congreve's "The Mourning Bride," London, 1697; Defoe's "True-Born Englishman," London, 1700, "The Spanish Descent," 1702, and "More Reformation," 1703; Ralph Hamor's "True Discourse of the present estate of Virginia," London, 1615; the entirely unrecorded first issue of Ben Jonson's "Time Vindicated to Himselfe"; Edward Nicholls's "The Dolphins Danger: and Deliverance," London, 1617; Pope's "Essay on Criticism," 1711; Richard Rich's "News from Virginia," 1610, one of five known copies; and John Smith's "Map of Virginia," 1612, were all as issued, in their original wrappers, and with the original stitching—such copies have almost never occurred at auction before, and the nobleman to whom they belonged ought sooner or later to be identified. One can only hope that his books will go to collectors who will have them properly catalogued.

G. M. T.

The afternoon of the 24th of July, the manuscripts and the remaining volumes in John Ruskin's library were sold at Sotheby's in London. The books included signed presentation copies from Carlyle of his "History of Friedrich II of Prussia," London, 1869, and the "Early Kings of Norway"; the Aldine Dante; presentation copies from Lewis Carroll of his "Rhyme and Reason?" and "Sylvie and Bruno Concluded"; and a tenth-century manuscript on vellum with Ruskin's manuscript notes. The Kate Greenaway collection was in itself of the greatest importance: over 250 letters from her to Ruskin, to whom she was devoted; a complete set of the "Almanicks," and various copies of separate years with inscriptions and original drawings; presentation copies of her best known books; and an enormous group of water-color drawings made it in interest far superior to the Meecham collection. The Ruskin manuscripts included six volumes of letters from Ruskin to his father; twenty-seven volumes of his Diaries and Notebooks, from 1835 to 1888; his Early Poems and Juvenilia, 1826-1838; the autograph manuscripts of portions of "The Poetry of Architecture" and "Modern Painters"; the autograph manuscript of "The King of the Golden River"; five cases of manuscript of "Stones of Venice"; the autograph manuscripts of the original drafts of "Lectures on Art"; the autograph manuscript of more than three-quarters of "Præterita"; and a group of undated miscellaneous notebooks. The prices brought by these manuscripts will be most useful as an index to the present interest in Ruskin.

G. M. T.

EARLY AMERICAN POETRY. A Compilation of the Titles and Volumes of Verse and Broadsides by Writers Born or Residing in North America, North of the Mexican Border. By OSCAR WEGELIN. New York: Peter Smith. 1930. $10.

AFTER a lapse of twenty-seven years, Mr. Wegelin has brought out a revised, enlarged edition of his valuable bibliography which the publisher, discarding the two volumes from the first edition, has wisely issued as a single volume, divided into two parts. The first of these includes books published between the years 1650 and 1799; the second extends from 1800 to 1820. Each part is further subdivided into two sections, the first listing titles of which the authors are known, while the second gives anonymous works. The plan is most ambitious, and Mr. Wegelin, so far as anyone can judge without the actual experience of using his book, has achieved successfully what he set out to accomplish largely because of the care he has taken to make the entire thing as authoritative as possible. There are several typographical errors that might have been avoided, and it is not always clear why transcriptions of title-pages are omitted when it has been reasonably simple to locate a copy of a given title, but these, after all, are minor criticisms. The work itself is excellent, not only as a guide to the earliest poetry written in this country that has been preserved in a more or less permanent manner; but as a source of information for collectors and indigent library cataloguers. Such revised editions of bibliographies, provided the revisions increase the usefulness of the volume, cannot be commended too highly.

It is not possible, after studying the titles in Mr. Wegelin's book, to experience a great wave of enthusiasm for the literary effusions of the Pilgrims, the Puritans, and the rest of the colonists: they composed a singularly depressing body of literature, wavering between religious exhortations, and elegies upon the decease of late virtuous wives of prominent New Englanders, who, as one poem remarks, "the night after public Thanksgiving, entered on the Celebration of Triumphant Hallelujahs," to their own personal profit, no doubt, and the survivors' loss. Occasionally, some one like Major André or Philip Freneau attempted a social or political satire, but the Michael Wigglesworth kind of thing, "The Day of Doom, or a Description of the Great and Last Judgment, with a Short Discourse about Eternity," predominated to an overpowering extent. (It may be pointed out, incidentally, that a copy of the second edition of Wigglesworth's "Meat Out of the Eater," a series of particularly dull and badly constructed rhymes dealing with pious topics, dated 1670, and published in Cambridge, Massachusetts, is at present in the Yale University Library; Mr. Wegelin notes that no copy is known before the fourth edition issued in 1689.) Collectors who enjoy looking for new subjects, or who are interested in antiquarian research, will find much to entertain them in the books of this period; the search is not easy, and the amount to be discovered will more than repay them for the labor involved.

G. M. T.

Small Things

THE Walpole Printing Office at New Rochelle has issued a small booklet on "Horace Walpole and His Printing Office at Strawberry Hill," illustrated with reproductions of delicate drawings of Walpole and of his printing office. The edition is 650 copies.

A CONVENIENT "Outline of the History of Printing" has been printed by the School of Library Science of Pratt Institute, Brooklyn.

IN a reprint of a recent magazine article by Douglas C. McMurtrie, he gives a brief summary of the detached work already done, by various writers, on the history of printing in the United States, and proposes that steps be taken to treat adequately of this subject as a whole.

THE "Klingspor Kalendar" for 1930, issued by the Klingspor type foundry at Offenbach on the Main, is as usual an exquisite piece of printing. If not quite so perfect as some of the previous issues, it is a creditable addition to that choice series.

R.

The Bacchus Club Announces

THE Bacchus Club, with headquarters at New Haven, announces publication, to members only, in the late summer of a thoroughly practical treatise on "Wine Making for the Amateur," written by R. Selden Rose and to be issued in a limited edition of 515 copies. There are to be four illustrations by W. A. Dwiggins, cut on wood by F. H. Fischer.

To Readers—and Proofreaders

IN a recent number of this *Review* I was made to speak of a German typographical magazine called, according to the proofreader, the "Philodidlon." It is possible that I so spelled it on my "copy"—but the burden of proof is with the printer. The word, as the intelligent reader will have guessed, is "Philobiblon."

R.

The autograph manuscript of Tennyson's "The Princess," consisting of 1,200 lines, covering the first five parts of the poem as published, has been sold for £1,750.

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Advance readers report on Inner Sanctum Dollar Novel

This is Testimonial Week.

Over 100 of the verdicts on *Jonathan Scrivener* have arrived at *The Inner Sanctum*, and though The Statistics Department has as yet not determined whether the Favorable Percentage is 89 or 92, a preliminary survey is in order. Here are excerpts from a few reports:

"*I Am Jonathan Scrivener* is certainly one of the most absorbing novels of the day. I read a good deal of modern fiction, but it is a long time since I have so completely enjoyed a story. Physically, I think *The Inner Sanctum Novels* are a great success. I have always been bothered by the flimsiness of the paper covers of French and other foreign novels; your stiff cardboard holds up beautifully under ordinary usage. But what particularly wins my heart is the fact that the book can be opened to a comfortable flatness without consequent destruction. The design and typography are unexceptionable. I have never handled a pleasanter book to read.
—H. B. MURKLAND, *Orange, N. J.*"

"I have just finished reading *I Am Jonathan Scrivener* which simply delighted me. It is indeed a rare treat to find a mystery story which completely omits the usual sleuth hokum. It represents the first of MR. HOUGHTON'S books that I have read. His scintillating dialogue is excellent. It has been my contention that the average new fiction published to retail at $1.00 is cheap fiction. However, *I Am Jonathan Scrivener* has completely convinced me that I am in error.
—CLAIRE BRUNSSEN, *New York, N. Y.*"

"I have just finished *Jonathan Scrivener*, and if the other books in your series are half as well made and half as good, I am sure your scheme is going to be one of the biggest successes of the year.
—EUGENE JOFFE, *New York, N. Y.*"

"I think *Jonathan Scrivener* in its dress will prove the event of the year when the reading public becomes aware of the high class novel which can be purchased at so small a cost. When a dollar-edition novel can combine good printing, durability, and design, one cannot resist believing there is still a Santa Claus.
—P. J. FEHNEL, JR., *Emaus, Pa.*"

"*I Am Jonathan Scrivener* certainly was an interesting and unusual book. The 'adventure' was carefully worked out, and was one of those imaginative excursions that all of us, at some time or other, would like to figure out for ourselves. And MR. HOUGHTON'S humor was delicious. I'd like to have more of it.

"As for the physical make-up of the book, I liked it. I thought it very good looking, that it had very good paper in it, and that it was the most comfortable book in the world to read. I read the greater part of the book lying down, and when you can take the book, double it backwards, without any trouble to yourself, nor harm to the book, you have *A* book.
—MARTIN HEFFERNAN, *New York, N. Y.*"

I Am Jonathan Scrivener, as well as five other novels in *The Inner Sanctum Novel* series, all retailing at one dollar, will be on sale everywhere beginning July 31st. The five other novels—to be described in detail in future Inner Sanctums—are:

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THE PHOENIX NEST

WE shall write one more of these turrets of temperament before we depart upon our summer vacation. Hasten the day! The book business seems to be in the comparative doldrums at present. . . .

Little, Brown had seven best-sellers in the April issue of Books of the Month. . . .

Angel Flores has translated *T. S. Eliot's* "The Waste Land" into Spanish and it is published in Barcelona, Editorial Cervantes, Avenida Alfonso XIII, 382. In Spanish the title is "Tierra Baldía." There is a short introduction by the translator, and then the poem begins

Abril es el mes más cruel; engendra
Lilas de la tierra muerta, mezcla
Memorias y anhelos, remueve
Paices perezosas con lluvias primaverales. . .

Further on in the poem it is somewhat amusing to come upon one of the Eliot lines thus rendered

O O O O ese Rag shakespeheriano

. . .

The introduction to "The Art of Drinking," Farrar and Rinehart, (the book is compiled by *Dexter Mason*) begins with an explanation that a relative has willed the writer his cellar and that "a full bottle of exquisite old brandy squats beside me as I pen these lines." The introduction then proceeds with a gradual diminution of coherence until—well, here are some of the closing remarks:

IT's the same kinf of an idea, the omly diggerence is that whrer we hace lost in qualiyt we have gainef in capafity. No. the frt of drikning is not a los tart. That8sa lot of %hooey, and ever bosy that I knoe qill aggre wiyh me. Yoiu cant keeop a good thing dowm. Whoopfs. Nrver agairian wrll I be able to gt anonenether boffle of brsndy loke tha tlast empty i got hwre. Well, gdoo nihgt and Havvy Neq Yreare.

. . .

For September the Book-of-the-Month Club will send out the complete stories of *Sherlock Holmes* by the late *Sir Arthur Conan Doyle* in two volumes, one containing the long stories, the other the short stories. Which reminds us that a lady of our acquaintance has waited over twenty years to reread "Lot No. 249" from "Round the Red Lamp." It was *Christopher Morley* who recently produced his own copy of this book, edition of 1894 D. Appleton & Company, in order that the lady in question should taste again the Pierian spring. And, again by the way, Mr. Morley will supply the introduction to the Book-of-the-Month Club volumes. He is the greatest Conan Doyle expert in the United States. . . .

A charming recent book is "The Small Years," by *Frank Kendon* (Macmillan), the story of an English childhood. It bears an introduction by *Walter de la Mare* and has delightful endpapers giving a view of the entire vicinity of the child's boarding-school home. . . .

R. L. Duffus's "Books: Their Place in a Democracy" may be recommended to the readers of this particular periodical who are, presumably, interested in books. Mr. Duffus undertook his study of book publication and distribution for the Carnegie Corporation. . . .

In "I am Jonathan Scrivener" (Simon and Schuster) the publisher explains to the buyer just what Inner Sanctum Dollar Novels are to be like. They are an experiment in publishing. Most fiction, they say, is bought for one reading only, library space in small apartments in the city is limited, hence this book at a dollar bound in paper. But if the reader should want to give it shelf-room after reading it and will send it back to the publishers with an additional dollar it will be bound in cloth and returned postpaid. The covers of The Inner Sanctum Novels, all with the drawing of the now famous Sower upon them, have three separate colors: Red, Blue and Green. The blue books are in a more or less serious vein, the red are books of a lighter nature, the green are detective and mystery stories.

Sinclair Lewis and *Dorothy Thompson* have gone up to their Vermont farm for the rest of the summer with their new son, Michael. . . .

Alpheus Butler, a recent graduate of the University of Denver, has compiled a collection of prose and poetry by members of the younger generation, under the title of "The Parnassian." The book is being printed by the Harris Wolff Estate. You may send your order to Laurel Publishers, P. O. Box 3029, Washington, D. C. . . .

Macmillan will publish in the fall a new book by *May Sinclair*, "Tales Told by Simpson," sure to be an excellent book of short stories. . . .

And a juvenile that we recommend from the same firm will be "Just Horses" by "*K. O. S.*" who is *Baroness Katrina von Dombrowski*. The Baroness can most certainly draw animals! We ourselves possess a German reproduction of her painting of a white and tortoiseshell cat, inscribed for us by the artist. Her children's book "Abdallah and His Donkey" is the favorite book, or one of them, of our youngest daughter. But her real specialty is etchings and lithographs of horses. And here is a big picture book of them, full pages, printed in Germany, the two tone lithographic effect of her black and brown pencil and crayon being perfectly duplicated by one of the finest German presses. The pictures are worth framing,—decidedly! . . . .

A story appeared in the *London Express* this month that *James Joyce* had had *Professor Vogt* of Zurich perform the ninth operation made on his eyes, for cataract, in March of this year. After that he kept his eyes bandaged, in order not to strain them. But recently, goes the tale, he went to the Opera to hear his friend John Sullivan sing and exclaimed "Thank God for this miracle. After twenty years I can really see again!" We wonder whether that is accurate. We certainly hope so! . . .

Wyndham Lewis's latest novel, published by The Arthur Press in London, is entitled "The Apes of God," contains 625 large pages, weighs just over five pounds, and costs three guineas. The edition is limited to 750 copies. We suppose that Mr. Lewis's Apes of God are the sham artists and sham Bohemians he has always so heartily disliked. . . .

We thank *E. L. C. Morse* of Hollywood, California, for his many state rhymes, but we have had to close down on that contest, —too many entries. Still, inasmuch as he has sent in so many we are going to print the one that particularly appealed to us:

Way down South in Louisiana
The white man drinks in his usual manner,
But the nigger goes dry
Or drinks on the sly
For the State is under the Volstead banner.

Which is, of course, not a regular limerick in form but is certainly susceptible of tuneful rendition! . . .

Grosset and Dunlap received permission from Little, Brown to issue on August 1st a 75 cent reprint edition of *Remarque's* "All Quiet on the Western Front." The Grosset and Dunlap edition is being printed from the English text—for the first time in this country. Something over 350,000 copies of the Little, Brown American edition have been sold over here and the total sale of this book for the whole world is now just over the two million mark. . . .

William Edwin Rudge is bringing out the first of a new and important series of books in "Currier & Ives Prints: The Spirit of America." Those to follow will describe each a special subject, such as Railroads, Horse-Racing, Yachting, Indians, etc. Each book will contain eight plates in full color, and the price per volume will be $2.25. The Rudge address is, as you probably know, 475 Fifth Avenue. . . .

An interesting sidelight on the Currier & Ives prints is contained in this paragraph from the introduction to the present book:

It is well to remember that newspapers of the period were not pictorial. The magazine was graphic only in a saccharine sense, with its fashion plates and flowers. The Currier & Ives prints told news of the day—and told it with strength and drama. A shipwreck of Monday was displayed in full color on Thursday. The rotogravure of to-day does no better than that. So much for speed.

. . .

Harold Von Schmidt has done some brilliantly distinctive illustrations for *Ralph Hubbard's* "Queer Person," the story of an outcast Indian boy. This is a juvenile for older boys that should not be overlooked. It is published by Doubleday, Doran. . . .

Bernard Newman's "The Cavalry Goes Through!" published over here by Henry Holt and Company had a splendid press in England last Spring. It is a novel of The Great War not as it was but as it might have been. . . .

THE PHOENICIAN.

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Reading in the Free State

By MARY MANNING

THIS is not a fairy story. Once upon a time a fat woman with a very red face, and a shawl thrown "careless-like" over her head, dashed into the public library in Pearse Street, Dublin, and addressed the librarian of the children's department in this manner: "What d'ye mean by lendin' all them books to my Eugene? Hidin' them up the chimney he is! And I'll have ye to know that my Eugene's goin' to Guinness to be a barrel-maker, and he's not goin' to waste his time readin' any more books or I'll have the law on you and your bloody library." And the irate parent flung down her offspring's last choice of fiction, and bounced out of the library. In this way was poor Eugene—a quiet, intelligent little boy—deprived of his intellectual stimulus, having his supply of literature cut off at the main, and now, I suppose, he has graduated into the noble craft of barrel-making.

This story is a typical example of the Dublin poorer class mother's attitude to her children. Send them out to earn as soon as it's legally or illegally possible. A favorite trick is to get them some little job before or after school hours. For instance, pinched little gnomes are sent round with the *morning* papers, and very often the child reaches school with his brain numbed with fatigue. There is little time for literature and reading is not encouraged in the home. Generations of miserable poverty, hide-bound prejudices, and intellectual slavery of medieval nature have made Irish children of this class the most elementary type in Europe.

The county libraries, which are financed by the Carnegie United Kingdom Trust, have always devoted a large portion of their organization to juvenile literature, but it was not until 1924 that the Irish municipal libraries opened children's departments in their various centres. The Pearse Street library which serves a depressing district of slums and docklands, has on an average two hundred juvenile visitors every day. Most of the small readers I saw there wore no shoes or stockings, and in winter I believe they are very pinched and miserable, but here they can do their homework in warmth and comfort and blessed quiet, which is more than they have in their miserable tenements. Ironically enough they have none of the luxuries which surround the middle-class children in the Rathmines public library. There is no wireless in Pearse Street. There used to be lectures, with a magic lantern, on Irish history and natural science, but they have ceased to be—not because they were unpopular, but I understand as a matter of finance. Their taste in reading is simple. Sociology, which includes fairy tales, comes first, and books on natural science, especially those dealing with birds and animals, come next. The boys like adventure stories by Clarke Russell and Mayne Reed, and the girls prefer Rosa Mulholland, L. T. Meade, and Louisa Alcott. Irish poetry is popular. Books on the useful arts have a fairly wide appeal; especially those on the construction of wireless, and dressmaking of a simple nature for the girls. But it is adventure, school tales, and the more harmless type of love story with which they choose to lighten their drab little lives.

The middle classes are served by the Rathmines and Pembroke public libraries. The Pembroke library is new, and though the children's department is crowded every day, it is comparatively unimportant as compared with Rathmines which contains probably the best juvenile section in Ireland. Here the children are drawn mostly from the Protestant middle class which, of course, makes a marked difference in the reading. They have a charming reading room, equipped with wireless and microscope and every conceivable book of reference, where the little dears can sit and do their homework. Here books on botany, natural science, woodcraft chivalry, and elementary science are very much in demand. Stories of a sternly practical Boy-Scout-round-the camp-fire nature are also very popular which, perhaps, explains why so many Irishmen of this type fill "the far-flung outposts of the Empire!" As for their taste in fiction, A. A. Milne romps home with all the honors, while Angela Brazil and Percy Westerman are runners up. The classics, including good Sir Walter, are dead; killed in the classroom! Of all Dickens's books, "David Copperfield" is the only one to attract the children. These young readers seem to renounce fairy stories at an indecently early age, but one must remember that the middle class Irish are the most practical, unromantic, disillusioned race in the world, and they get that way from their earliest youth. After all they bred people like G. B. S. and James Joyce, and it is in the Rathmines public library that you find the quintessence of Shavianism.

The county libraries serve the country people. "In county Dublin there is a stock of 35,000 books serving a population of 80,483 people. These books are delivered by van to 130 centres, and on an average 40 centres are visited every month. More than 40,000 books were issued in Wexford last year, while in Leix the issue reached the high figure of 95,000." This system is carried out in even the most remote districts in the West.

The country reader's choice in juvenile literature is interesting. There are more than sixty copies of Hans Andersen's fairy tales in every county library, and they are always out. Next in order of popularity comes "Alice in Wonderland," Grimm's Goblins, and Andrew Lang's fascinating fairy books which take their titles from the color of their bindings. Stories by Standish O'Grady, Father Finn, and Ellis are widely read, and their circulation is encouraged by the Christian Brothers. Annuals are popular. Books by Lever, Lefanu, and Lover, the Victorian trio, are also in demand. But the country children have not the same passion for nature study which one finds in the town child.

Apart from the public libraries, the convent schools have carefully chosen libraries for the girls, while teaching orders such as the Christian Brothers, take a keen interest in their pupil's reading. English school stories are not too much encouraged, and English magazines of the cheaper kind such as the *Gem* and the *Magnet* are definitely taboo because of their British character. Instead a depressing little magazine called *Our Boys*, published in Dublin and of a high moral tone, is very much encouraged. It has the amazing weekly circulation of 60,000. But in spite of the official and unofficial censorship, Irish children are reading, and education is progressing.

Pray God, with the munificence of the late Andrew Carnegie and those sixty copies of Hans Andersen, we may catch up on the twentieth century within the next ten years.

Conducted by MARION PONSONBY

Reviews

TALES OF NORMANDIE. By PAUL BARTON WATSON. Boston: Marshall Jones. 1930. $2.50.

Reviewed by JOHN M. S. ALLISON
Yale University

THIS is a little book with a pleasing appearance, a neat binding, and nine very good illustrations. In the Foreword, the author explains that the purpose of the book "is merely to tell the story of a few events that are memorable in Norman history," and he explains that the pictures that he gives are substantially correct.

It is quite obvious that the "Tales of Normandie" have been written for children of the present day to acquaint them with the stories of Queen Mathilda's Tapestry, Mont Saint Michel, Joan of Arc, Charlotte Corday, and a few literary and artistic celebrities. One suspects as well that the book is an answer to the requirements of those exacting parents who desire their children to read no nonsense, no fairy-tales or romances, but to know from the very first, poor things, the bare, stark, established facts of history—not history as the people of the time believed it but as the most rigid criticism would have it today.

The treatment is, therefore, thoroughly modern and the tone is in keeping with the treatment. To a child the book would seem to be convincing. But, is this new type of history-telling for children an improvement on the more romantic and pleasing histories for them that one used to read twenty-five years ago? One may be allowed to doubt it. It is, naturally, more colorless and less romantic, *cela va sans dire*, but, at least, say its exponents, it has the earmarks of truth. Even that argument cannot be accepted without qualifications.

It is almost amusing, for example, to see how the modern author treats the inexplicable or the supernatural. In earlier books one reads that the good Bishop of Avranches was inspired to build a house of worship on the Island of Mont Saint Michel. These books tell us that "he had a vision." But today, as in the case of the book under review, one reads "He thought that he saw a vision." I doubt that the good Bishop *thought* that he saw a vision. The effort to be scrupulously scientific and to avoid putting into the mind of the child reader anything mysterious has resulted in this instance, as it does in so many others, in an entirely meaningless phrase. And as for accuracy, it is as absent in the modern histories for children as it was lacking in the earlier and more romantic versions that one used to read. One learns with surprise that the monks of Mont Saint Michel were anchorites, and once more one encounters the dogmatic statement that cannon were first employed at Crécy. Any careful examination of authoritative studies on this much-mooted question would reveal the fact that even the most distinguished scholars have been very cautious and declare that cannon were said to have been first used at Crécy. Again it is indeed a shock when one reads that citizens feared the destruction of their town by bombardment in 1356. Similar instances of misunderstandings may be found in the chapter treating of Charles VI and of Joan of Arc. Most novel of all is the author's conception of what is meant by the Communion of the Saints. All of which tends to show that one cannot write popular history for children and observe all the modern standards. The chapters on Corneille, Millet, Flaubert, and Maupassant are nicely done and are by far the best in the book.

GREAT NAVIGATORS AND DISCOVERS. By J. R. BRENDON. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co. 1930. $2.50.

Reviewed by CATHERINE WOODBRIDGE

AWARE that a compilation is nearly always assailable from the point of view of choice Mr. Brendon makes the statement in his Foreword that "his aim has been to set out the stories of twenty-four representative sailors and at the same time to show how the peoples of Europe made themselves the masters of the seven seas."

In this latter aspect lies the distinct contribution of his book. Whether or not specialists may find important omissions it is invaluable as a continuous narrative of exploration and expansion. The history of exploration is rarely studied as such. It is usually brought in as incidental to particular periods and so the interaction of events is lost. For instance, Pope Alexander's bull dividing the world into two parts acquires a new significance in the light of a complete story of the rival discoveries and claims which necessitated it. This book, though divided into a series of articles on particular men, nevertheless follows consecutively the impulses to and the results of exploration as well as the expeditions themselves from the earliest historical data down to the use of the steamboat. These men were sailors all, whether distinguished particularly as explorers or navigators. A few essentially fighting adventurers appear because though they may not have "helped to bring about the overseas expansion of Europe they nevertheless played a big part in the establishing of that New World which Canning, in order to redress the balance of the Old, strove to call into being." So we find John Paul Jones and Admiral Cochrane along with Leif Ericsson and Vasco da Gama.

The proof of the validity of such a choice lies in the fact that the book hangs together as a whole. It answers the questions as to why certain discoveries came about before others and why colonization occurred when it did. From the technical point of view there is much interesting incidental information on such questions as the kind and size of boats used by the Vikings and the armaments that gave the English such superiority over the Spanish Armada. In fact, though the narrative is told very simply it is so meaty with important information that one can hardly put it down. Many quotations from contemporaries of his seamen bear witness to the thoroughness of the author's research and greatly increase the vividness of the stories. There cannot fail to be a thrill for any boy in reading the account of Vasco da Gama's journey around the coast of Africa written by one of his sailors. The ring of authenticity gives added glamo these reports.

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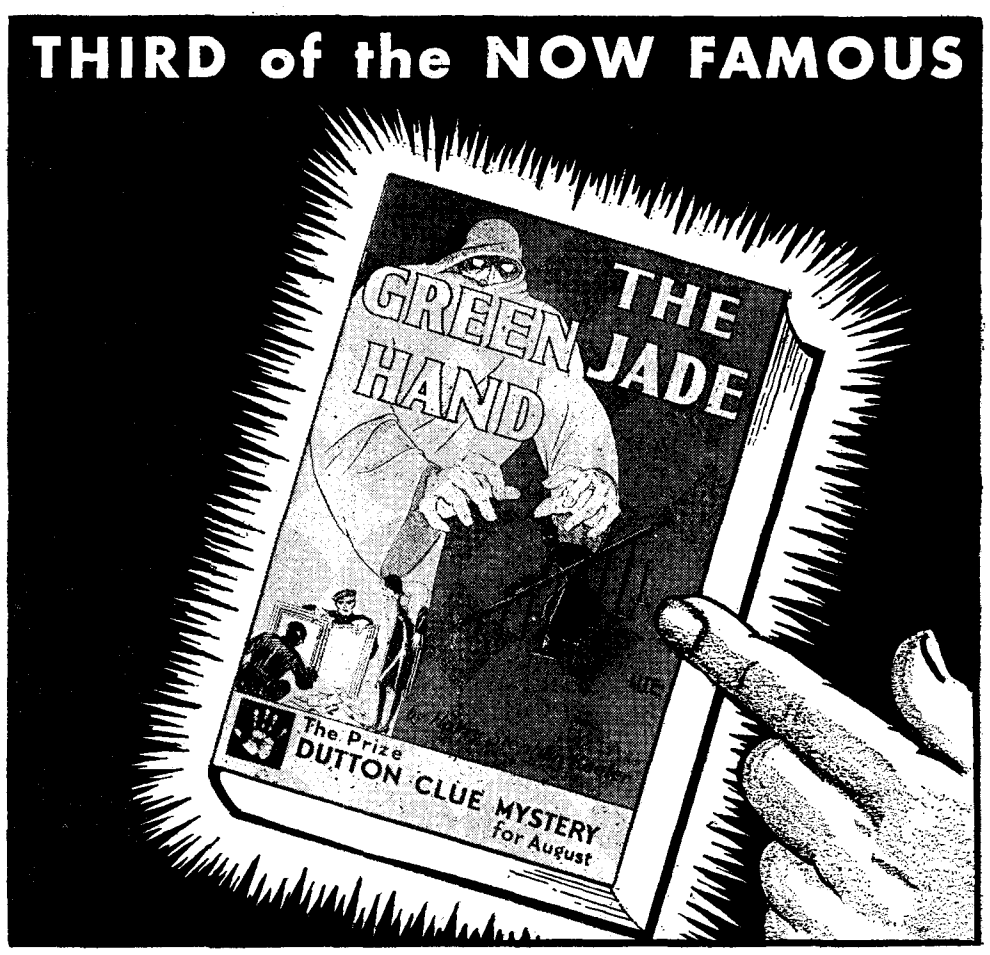

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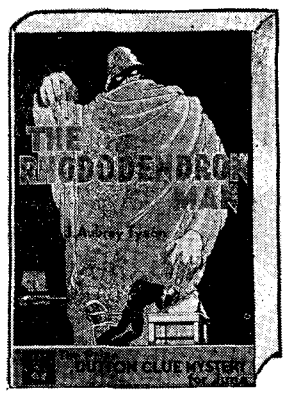

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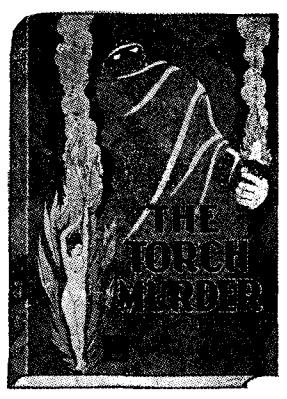

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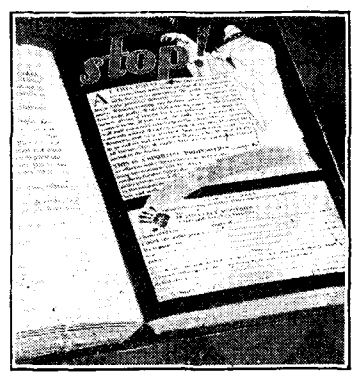

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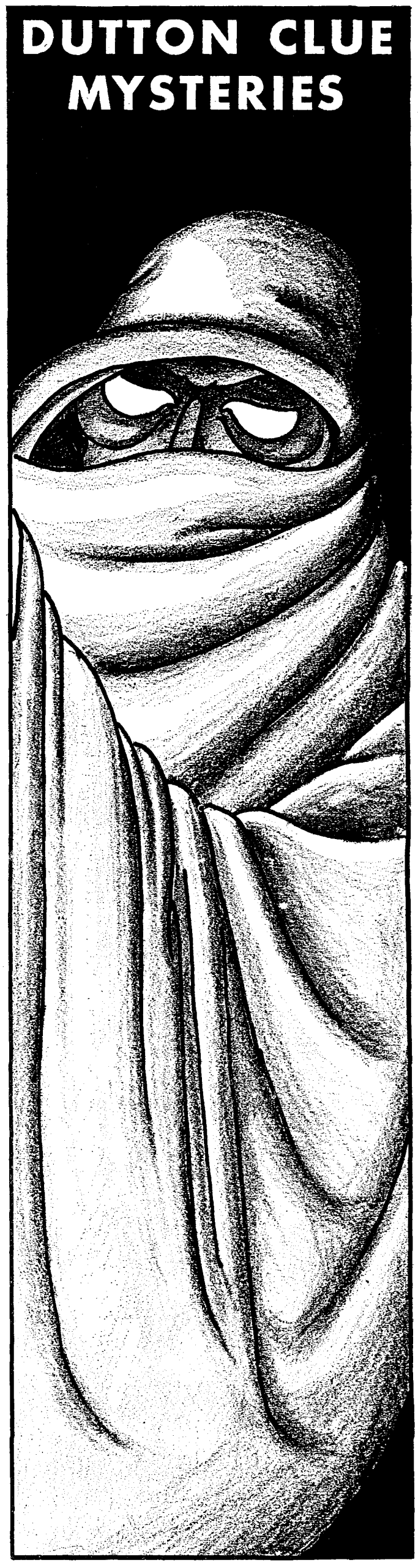

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